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Celebrity pg 27

Awkward moment at Golden Globes

Song choice lands DJ in hot water

ENGLAND A British radio DJ is being criticized for playing Van Halen's Jump as police tried to talk a suicidal woman down from a highway bridge last Thursday. DJ Steve Penk said he played the song at the request of a commuter sitting in traffic on a highway shut down while police tried to talk the woman off the bridge.

Penk refused to apologize for the decision, saying he was standing by his audience. The 30-year-old woman eventually jumped, sustaining only minor injuries, shattering her heel bones. **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

News on the Move

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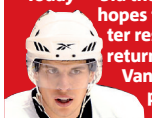
Vancouver Games

Countdown to 2010

Follow Metro as we bring you daily coverage leading up to the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver.

• Today — Sid the Kid hopes for better results in return trip to Vancouver, page 14



On the web

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Ke$ha Chart topper

JOHN R. KENNEDY/FOR METRO TORONTO

Pop star Ke$ha appears on MuchOnDemand last night. The Tik Tok singer, who recently knocked Susan Boyle off the top of the music charts, is in Toronto promoting her debut album Animal.

Deadly streets

Seven pedestrians killed in GTA over the last week

While fewer people in Toronto are dying behind the wheel of their cars, the city's streets are becoming more dangerous for pedestrians.

That's what recent traffic stats show, highlighting a grim trend amid a deadly week for walkers in the GTA.

Seven pedestrians were killed across the region in the last seven days, beginning last Tuesday, when a teenager in Vaughan, a young mother in Etobicoke, and a senior citizen in the city's west end were all run down the same day.

Later in the week, a 24-year-old woman was killed by a Brampton transit bus, a man taking a shortcut was hit by a GO train, and a father walking with his wife and four-year-old son was run over by a tow truck. During yesterday morning's rush hour, a 60-year-old woman was killed by a TTC bus.

Toronto Const. Hugh Smith said the situation is getting worse in Toronto because as the city crowds, people aren't using their senses to protect themselves — blocking sound with earphones and limiting their vision with hoods and hats — and drivers are more distracted than ever.

"Everybody's moving quickly, pedestrians are moving blindly and nobody's communicating."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Numbers

• Pedestrian fatalities in Toronto as a percentage of total traffic fatalities:

2009 — 31 of 48 = 65%
2008 — 27 of 54 = 50%
2007 — 23 of 52 = 44%
2006 — 30 of 57 = 53%

University applications increase by almost 3 per cent

LEARNING Almost 2,300 more prospective students have applied to enter Ontario's universities this September, new data shows.

Numbers released yesterday show 86,500 students have sent in applications to the Ontario Universities' Application Centre. That's an almost three per cent increase over last year.

The number of mature students applying is also almost three per cent higher compared to last year.

The Council of Ontario Universities says that could mean more than 45,000 mature students applying by the end of their application cycle in September.

There has been concern that Ontario's Grade 12 students will face heavier competition for university and college spaces in high employment courses as those laid off due to the shaky economy seek to go back to school.

There has been a 46 per cent increase in the number of university applicants since 2000. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**

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SCANLIFE

Local

Board of Trade hosts First Nations Chief

Assembly of First Nations National Chief Shawn Atleo, left, will address Toronto's business community today. The event marks Atleo's first address in Toronto and the first time any AFN national chief has spoken to the Toronto Board of Trade.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

News in brief

SLAMMER A Toronto financial adviser accused of operating a multimillion-dollar Ponzi scheme had to spend another night in jail yesterday pending a resumption of his bail hearing yesterday. Weizhen Tang, 51, is charged with fraud over $5,000, and accused of defrauding about 100 investors of about $30 million through his hedge fund, the Oversea Chinese Fund Limited Partnership. He returned to Canada from China last week to face the charge.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Tomorrow's Metro

West View
Paul Sullivan brings the West's perspective on Canadian events to Metro's pages.

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WHAT'S ONLINE TODAY

Your Money Allan Small on where investors should look to cash in as the economic rebound continues in 2010 at **metronews.ca/investing**

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Life for bomb plot mastermind

So-called Toronto 18 terrorist not eligible for parole until 2016

The mastermind behind a "spine-chilling" terrorist plot that would have caused untold deaths and destruction was handed a life sentence yesterday — the maximum sentence under Canada's anti-terrorism laws — though he's able to apply for parole in 2016.

"There is no dispute that what would have occurred was multiple deaths and injuries ... With one-tonne bombs at each location, the result would have been catastrophic."
Ontario Superior Court Justice Bruce Durno

Zakaria Amara, 24, whose religious ideology fuelled plans to set off massive truck bombs outside the CSIS and Toronto Stock Exchange buildings in downtown Toronto and at a military base in Ontario, is the first person to be given the maximum penalty for terrorist offences.

Ontario Superior Court Justice Bruce Durno said Amara's "spine-chilling" plot would have been "the most horrific crime Canada has ever seen."

"There is no dispute that what would have occurred was multiple deaths and injuries," he said.

As the three one-tonne ammonium nitrate bombs were supposed to explode at the end of the morning rush hour, "the impact would have been magnified as workers arrived for work. With one-tonne bombs at each location, the result would have been catastrophic," Durno said.

The life sentence does not mean he will necessarily be jailed for life, but if he receives parole he will be under supervision for the rest of his life.

He is eligible to apply for parole 10 years after his arrest, which would be in just more than another six years. THE CANADIAN PRESS

School celebrates Martin Luther King Jr.

BLACK HISTORY There were earnest tributes to Martin Luther King Jr. and a moving clip from I Have A Dream — with two thumping Michael Jackson hits to spice up the program.

At Canada's only public Africentric alternative school students celebrated King's birthday yesterday with the children of Sheppard Public School, with whom they have shared a building since opening last fall.

Before a sea of Africentric vests mixed with the blue T-shirts of Sheppard, a young Africentric dance group performed Jackson's Man in the Mirror, followed by Grade 4 and 5 students from Sheppard singing his hit Black or White.

"I like this school because we learn about people who did important stuff so we can live the way we do today," said nine-year-old Ayinde Skerritt-Williams, a Grade 4 student at the Africentric school.

CARLOS OSORIO/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

The Grade 4-5 class at the Toronto Africentric Alternative School performs a number called The Seven Principles. Students celebrated Martin Luther King Jr. Day yesterday with an assembly.

He is one of 130 children from junior kindergarten to Grade 5 in the alternative program housed in an unused wing of Sheppard.

There is a waiting list of 50 more and the school is scrambling to find a place for the Grade 6 class it will add this fall.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Study over for 501 Queen route

STREETCAR LINE When it comes to the much-maligned Queen streetcar route, what you see now is about as good as the service is likely to get, according to the TTC.

Service has improved somewhat, after more than a year and about $2 million spent on experimenting with various scheduling and route adjustments. But TTC staff are recommending against splitting the 24-kilometre Queen 501 streetcar route into two lines.

A report before the city councillors on the Toronto Transit Commission last week shows splitting the route in half actually increased the number of short turns by 90 per cent overall during a five-week experiment last October and November.

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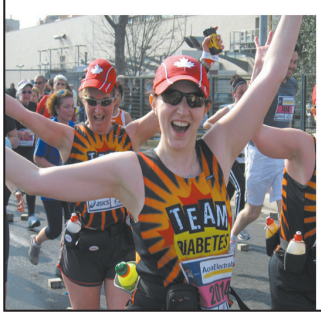

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Guilty plea in York U sex assaults

Daniel Katsnelson, 27, pleaded guilty in Superior Court yesterday to sexually assaulting two women on York University campus in 2007. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

FRANK GUNN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Premier Dalton McGuinty, centre, leads new cabinet ministers, from left, Carol Mitchell, Linda Jeffrey, Eric Hoskins and Sophie Aggelonitis as they leave the swearing-in ceremony yesterday.

Renovated cabinet

Four MPPs promoted, three demoted in shakeup

Premier Dalton McGuinty is promoting four new faces to the Ontario cabinet and dropping three veterans in one of his largest shakeups yet.

Hamilton's Sofia Aggelonitis becomes minister of consumer services, Carole Mitchell from Huron Bruce is the new minister of agriculture and Brampton's Linda Jeffrey is the minister of natural resources.

Dr. Eric Hoskins, who was elected in a Toronto byelection just last fall, is Ontario's new minister of citizenship and immigration.

Those dropped from cabinet include former consumer minister Ted McMeekin, former natural resources minister Donna Cansfield and former culture minister Aileen Carroll.

Brad Duguid will be the new minister of energy and infrastructure, while Attorney General Chris Bentley will add Duguid's old aboriginal affairs portfolio to his duties.

Jim Bradley moves from transportation to municipal affairs and housing, Kathleen Wynne moves to transportation while former agriculture minister Leona Dombrowsky takes over education.

Markham's Michael Chan takes over tourism and culture, while North Bay's Monique Smith moves from tourism to become government house leader and minister of intergovernmental affairs.

Dwight Duncan remained in the key finance portfolio, while John Wilkinson stays in revenue and Deb Matthews in health.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

TV host pleads not guilty as alleged air rage trial begins

FLIGHT A transatlantic flight became a chaotic scene of cursing and assault when it landed in St. John's last year for a medical emergency, the trial of a Toronto broadcaster accused of air rage heard yesterday.

Colleen Walsh, 49, has pleaded not guilty to charges of assault, obstructing the operation of an aircraft and causing a disturbance.

The former CBC Radio and Global TV personality sat in provincial court yesterday as her trial began, at times shaking her head at the testimony.

Air Canada service director Guy Marion described how the seven-hour flight from London to Toronto last March 31 was diverted to St. John's. The Boeing 767 changed course after a female passenger lost, then regained, consciousness, he said, describing it as "a serious medical emergency."

Marion pointed to Walsh in court, identifying her as a passenger who came forward to offer first aid to the ill woman seated near her.

"She was told that her help wasn't needed," Marion said, noting that a physician on-board had already responded to his request for a doctor over the PA system. "We had to inform her a few times to return to her seat."

CARLOS OSORIO/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE FILE PHOTO

Colleen Walsh

While on the tarmac during a 50-minute delay, Walsh "got into it with another passenger and started cursing," Marion told provincial court Judge Greg Brown.

Passenger Stan Harrington, 67, testified that Walsh "hit me on the right side of the head" after he asked her to sit down. "It was quite substantial," he said of the blow. "My head went over (to the left) and I felt a sharp pain."

Her trial is scheduled to continue today.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Majority supports separating bike lanes from traffic

POLL People who ride bikes and people who don't would like to see more bike lanes separated from car traffic in Toronto, according to a survey carried out by the city.

The Ipsos-Reid survey found that the number of cyclists in Toronto since a similar survey taken 10 years ago has edged up. Some 54 per cent said they use a bike, compared with 48 per cent in 1999.

The survey found that 29 per cent of Torontonians are "utilitarian cyclists" who use their bikes to get to school or work, to shop or visit friends. That's up from 20 per cent.

Utilitarian cyclists rated separating cycling lanes from traffic as the No. 1 improvement they'd like to see, with 77 per cent in favour. Recreational cyclists (68 per cent) and non-cyclists (66 per cent) also like the idea of separating bike lanes from traffic.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

TTC

- Bike racks on buses have had limited success; 84 per cent of cyclists say they've never used them.

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Comment

Advocating against social injustice

When devastation and incalculable human suffering occurs — like the horror in Haiti — the subsequent outpouring of support is a refreshing reminder of human altruism; an encouraging affirmation given the regrettable events of another news story that was uncovered by the Toronto Star a day after the quake, yet overshadowed by it.

This story demonstrated the darker element of humanity. Here's how it goes: 20 recovering addicts came to their early morning class at the private Clear Haven Center, just north of Montreal. They were part of a three-month cognitive therapy program costing more than $15,000. As they arrived at Clear Haven, they were greeted with the announcement that the centre had gone bankrupt.

Then, with no warning, no plan and no place to go, they were given $100, then arbitrarily dumped on a bus like a load of refuse headed to a convenient depot: Montreal's international airport. Some were crying. No one knows how much money was lost by the clients and their families.

Whatever progress they had made ended abruptly. Two clients snorted cocaine on the bus and Elijah Peabbles, 26, relapsed into heroin use the day after, overdosed and ended up brain dead. He had come a long way in only a month. For the others, who knows.

How these vulnerable human beings were treated is unconscionable and cruel, yet highlights the plight of inequity and injustice faced by many in the greatest need of advocacy: Addicts, mental health sufferers, the disabled and the poor, and this group has been growing.

Bill Wilkerson, the founder of Global Business and Economic Roundtable on Mental Health, has declared depression among Canada's public servants as the country's biggest public health crisis, while warning that it's on the rise everywhere.

Mental health professionals have stated that addictions cut across all socio-economic strata and takes a devastating toll on entire families.

Respect and sensitivity by all professionals attending to those in greatest need is a reasonable expectation, yet contrary to the arrant disregard displayed at Clear Haven Center.

The people let go at Clear Haven could have been one of our loved ones. How they were treated highlights the urgency for citizens to become astute observers and advocates for those close to us who are in need.

Christine Williams is the producer and host of the live current affairs daily talk show On the Line at CTS TV in Burlington, Ont.

Editor's note

• Lawrence Martin's National Report will return next week.

Views

Taxpayers may be on the hook once again

You could call it Canada's version of the sub-prime mortgage crisis.

According to a recent account in the Globe and Mail, as many as 30,000 homeowners face mortgage foreclosure over the next three years. We're not talking about ne'er-do-wells who skip payments or laid-off workers. These are hard-working folks who have made all their payments. It's just that the mortgage lenders who happily approved their loans last time around won't renew.

But these now reluctant "non-traditional" mortgage lenders have a great suggestion. The mortgage renewals they won't touch with a bargepole should be underwritten by Canada's only inexhaustible source of finance — us taxpayers. A new lobby group for the very lenders who are abandoning the sub-prime set wants Ottawa to back a $1-billion fund to refinance its now vulnerable clients.

Government bailouts are problematic because they distort the market's process of natural selection, muddying economic realities with political agendas. Embattled homeowners are an equally sensitive subject. How can politicians stand idly by while Suzie and Sammy Homemaker are thrown into the street?

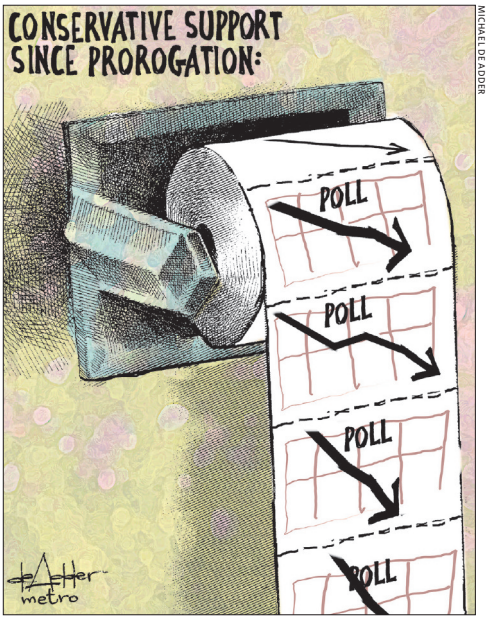
Well, here are a couple reasons. First, consider that home ownership is not a right, but an earned privilege. The people now facing foreclosure would never have been approved by "traditional" or "prime" mortgage lenders like banks or trust companies.

The current crisis has been brewing for more than two years. That's when our "non-traditional" sub-prime lenders started heading for the exits. Take Xceed Mortgage Corp., a lender that was happy to ride the housing boom earlier in the decade. Its assets rose 20-fold to $2.7 billion in 2007 while profits went from less than zero to a peak of $22 million in 2006.

But Xceed was securitizing its sub-prime mortgage assets, packaging and reselling them, and when the Asset Backed Commercial Paper crisis killed that market in mid-2007, the company could no longer function profitably.

In the end, it's a sad business, but the rest of us shouldn't pay for it.

Charles Davies is a veteran business writer who has worked for Canadian and international news organizations.



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Diabetes rates high among young aboriginal women: Study

A 25-year study shows rates of diabetes among aboriginals have been rising at an alarming rate, especially for women of child-bearing age. The University of Saskatchewan study found the incidence of diabetes is more than four times higher in First Nations women compared to non-First Nations women. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Canada

Green jobs key: U.S. ambassador

President Barack Obama's man in Ottawa says "green jobs" are the key to long-term economic recovery in both the United States and Canada. U.S. Ambassador David Jacobson, left, offered that assessment in an exclusive and wide-ranging interview with The Canadian Press. Jacobson says one of the reasons Obama is so concerned with climate change is that he sees it as an economic issue as much as an environmental one. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Officials worry over security in Haiti

Risk of violence a key challenge: Cannon

The 1,000 Canadian soldiers departing for Haiti over the next week are facing an increasingly volatile security situation as anger and desperation grow in the wake of last Tuesday's killer earthquake.

Foreign Affairs Minister Lawrence Cannon says security has been fingered as one of the key challenges facing relief and reconstruction efforts as aid slowly ramps up and the death toll continues to mount.

"Although the concern over an increase in civilian violence is shared by several countries involved, it will be resolved by our capacity to deliver aid and our capacity to stabilize Haiti," Cannon said yesterday.

Some of the infantry coming out of the Royal 22nd Regiment's base at Valcartier, Que., will be tasked with ensuring the "humanitarian corridor" remains open, he said.

Prime Minister Stephen Harper spoke with Haitian President Andre Preval yesterday. Preval was in the Dominican Republic attending an international conference on Haiti.

Harper conveyed the "deep support and unwavering commitment of the Canadian government and the Canadian people for Haiti," said a release from the Prime Minister's Office.

Harper also outlined Canada's funding commitments and relief efforts.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

By the numbers

- A look at some of the latest official Canadian and international numbers emerging from the Canadian relief effort in Haiti:
- Canadians missing: 859
- Canadians confirmed dead: 11
- Canadians located: 1,433
- Canadians believed to be in Haiti: More than 6,000

Torch On the clifftops

JEFF MCINTOSH/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Torchbearer Wendy Lumby, right, passes on the Olympic flame to Michael Strikes-with-a-Gun on top of the cliffs at Head-Smashed-In Buffalo Jump, Alta., yesterday. Follow the Olympic torch's journey with an interactive map at metronews.ca/sports.

Retirement dreams hard to come by: Poll

SAVINGS Most Canadians believe they will have enough money to get by in retirement, but only one-in-four figure they'll be living the dream in their so-called golden years, according to an RBC poll.

Results the poll issued yesterday found that 90 per cent of those surveyed believed they would have enough income to cover necessities when they retire. But only a quarter of respondents felt they would have enough to "fulfil their retirement dreams." THE CANADIAN PRESS

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SCANLIFE

The use of GPS by apps such as Foursquare put social networking back on privacy commissioner's radar. Scan this code for the story.

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High winds cause power outage in Vancouver
Winds gusting up to 80 kilometres per hour caused havoc for Vancouver commuters and left thousands of homes on the south coast of B.C. and on Vancouver Island without power. More than 50,000 customers have been affected by power outages. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Tories win ad expense fight

The federal Conservatives have won a court victory over Elections Canada in a case that saw Mounties raid Tory party headquarters over $1.2 million in contested advertising expenses during the 2006 federal election.

But the opposition says the court ruling won't end the controversy.

Federal Court Judge Luc Martineau yesterday rejected claims by Elections Canada that advertising expenses attributed to Tory candidates should have been reported as expenses for the national Conservative campaign.

The ruling means Elections Canada will have to reimburse 67 candidates for thousands of dollars each in expenses. It also means the party has dodged the prospect of having illegally exceeded its campaign spending limit by more than $1 million.

Still, Martineau questioned the "legitimacy" of the so-called "in and out" ad scheme because of the effect it could have on the fairness of electoral spending law. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Man pleads guilty to fatally stabbing senior

DEATH The widow of an elderly man killed while delivering Christmas cards says she died "a thousand deaths" on the day her husband was murdered.

Hunter Brown was 74 when he was stabbed 45 times — mostly on the face — as he was hand-delivering cards to neighbours.

Trevor LaPierre, 24, pleaded guilty to second-degree murder in a packed Kitchener courtroom, as well as to assault on another neighbourhood man two days later.

THE WATERLOO REGION RECORD-STAFF/THE CANADIAN PRESS
Trevor LaPierre is led into court yesterday in Kitchener.

Brown's widow described the anguish she's suffered since seeing her husband's lifeless body two years ago. She says she's haunted by the "horrific" way her husband died and wonders why she wasn't killed instead.

LaPierre was arrested soon after the stabbing as he and his father were en route to a psychiatric ward. According to the agreed statement of facts read into evidence, he did it to please Satan and "to save himself." THE CANADIAN PRESS

Yemeni minister disputes al-Qaida claims in Ottawa

TERROR Yemen is denying claims by al-Qaida that six of its members survived a recent air strike on militants in the country.

Yemeni Foreign Affairs Minister Abubaker Alqirbi says he believes the dead men were simply buried before the military could verify the success of the air strikes.

Alqirbi is in Ottawa today meeting his Canadian counterpart, Lawrence Cannon. Canada is considering increased development spending in Yemen to stop militants from recruiting poor vulnerable people to its ranks. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Deadly flash floods hit Middle East

Heavy rains and flash floods left seven people dead in Egypt and Israel yesterday, including a British tourist who was killed when a sailboat capsized on the Nile River. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

World

Agca says he is 'messenger from God'

The Turkish man who shot Pope John Paul II in 1981 was released from prison yesterday after more than 29 years and said he was a messenger of God and that the world will end in this century. Mehmet Ali Agca, 52, left the prison in a convoy of several vehicles. Turkish authorities plan to monitor him because of questions about his mental health.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Aid flows, frustration persists

Help not reaching all who need it, looting and violence spread

Haiti Crisis

Troops, doctors and aid workers flowed into Haiti yesterday and officials said billions of dollars more will be needed following the quake that killed an estimated 200,000 people and left many still struggling to find a cup of water or a handful of food.

European nations pledged more than a half-billion dollars in emergency and long-term aid, on top of at least $100 million promised earlier by the U.S. The president of the neighbouring Dominican Republic said it will cost far more to finally rebuild the country: $10 billion.

Help was still not reaching many victims of last Tuesday's quake — choked back by transportation bottlenecks, bureaucratic confusion, fear of attacks on aid convoys, the collapse of local authority and the sheer scale of the need.

Read and comment on Twitter updates from the ground on our Haiti liveblog at **metronews.ca/world**

Death toll

- The Pan-American Health Organization estimates between 50,000 and 100,000; Haitian officials put the figure higher.

Looting spread to more parts of downtown Port-au-Prince as hundreds of young men and boys clambered up broken walls to break into shops and take whatever they could find. Especially prized was toothpaste, which people smear under their noses to fend off the stench of decaying bodies. At a collapsed and burning shop in the market area, youths used broken bottles, machetes and razors to battle for bottles of rum and police fired shots to break up the crowd.

"I am drinking as much as I can. It gives courage," said Jean-Pierre Junior, wielding a broken wooden plank with nails to protect his bottle of rum.

Even so, the U.S. Army's on-the-ground commander, Lt. Gen. Ken Keen, said the city is seeing less violence than before the earthquake. "Is there gang violence? Yes. Was there gang violence before the earthquake? Absolutely."

RICARDO ARDUENGO/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

People take goods from a quake-collapsed store in Port-au-Prince yesterday.

U.S. officials say some 2,200 Marines were arriving to join 1,700 U.S. troops now on the ground and UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon announced yesterday he wants 1,500 more UN police and 2,000 more troops to join the existing 7,000 military peacekeepers and 2,100 international police in Haiti. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Groups call for show of force

IRAN Iranian opposition groups flooded the web yesterday with calls for a massive show of force during next month's anniversary of the Islamic Revolution, openly taunting authorities who have warned of a punishing response to any disruptions of the most hallowed day in the Iranian political calendar.

The blitz of messages and videos on opposition sites and social networking forums highlighted the continued ability of anti-government forces to harness the Internet despite attempts by Iranian officials to cripple their web outreach.

It also suggested that the Feb. 11 commemorations could become a replay of the street battles that have marked other major political and religious dates in past months that anti-government protesters have used to challenge the ruling system.

"Countrymen, rise up," read one message by the opposition blog Balatarin.com.

"Victory is near."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Schreiber goes on trial in Germany

TAX EVASION Businessman Karlheinz Schreiber, who was extradited from Canada last August after losing a decade-long legal battle to stay in the country, went on trial in Germany yesterday on charges of tax evasion.

The charges stem from his role in a financing scandal dating back to the era of former German chancellor Helmut Kohl.

Prosecutors accuse Schreiber of failing to declare millions from kickbacks he received.

Schreiber

While in Canada, a public inquiry headed by Justice Jeffrey Oliphant examined the financial dealings between Schreiber and former prime minister Brian Mulroney. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

News in brief

PIRACY A shootout between rival Somali pirates gangs over a $5.5 million US ransom threatened to turn an oil tanker and 28 hostages aboard into a fireball. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Donors could learn lessons from past disaster zones, where goodwill withered in the face of corruption and chaos. Scan here for the story.

Tight race heading into Ukrainian run-off
Voters in the first round of Ukraine's presidential election gave opposition leader Viktor Yanukoyvch a big lead over his rival, Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko. But that advantage in Sunday's vote could prove illusory when the two go head-to-head Feb. 7 in the final round of voting. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Brazen assault rocks Kabul

Explosions and gunfire rocked the heart of Kabul yesterday as insurgents attacked government buildings and a downtown hotel in the most brazen assault on the Afghan capital since last fall.

Afghan officials said 12 people were killed, including seven attackers. More than 70 others were wounded in nearly five hours of fighting before the Afghan government said it had the situation under control.

Taliban spokesman Zabiullah Mujahid told The Associated Press that 20 armed militants, including some with explosive vests designed for suicide missions, had entered Kabul to target the presidential palace and other government buildings in the centre of Kabul.

Explosions and heavy machine-gun fire rattled the city for hours. Debris was strewn on the streets, which were quickly abandoned by crowds that normally fill the area. Defence Ministry spokesman Gen. Mohammad Zahir Azimi said a child and a policeman were killed.

After a series of blasts and more than three hours of gunfights outside several ministries and inside a shopping mall, President Hamid Karzai said security had been restored to the capital. Search operations continued amid reports that more attackers were hiding in the city.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Canadians safe

- The gunfire and chaos sent staff at the Canadian Embassy rushing to a secure part of their compound for safety. There has been no report of any Canadian casualties from the fighting. "I was particularly concerned about those Canadian advisers who were helping Afghan government ministries," Ambassador William Crosbie told The Canadian Press. "So far, from what we know, all the Canadians are safe."

SEAN GALLUP/GETTY IMAGES

German Chancellor Angela Merkel and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu speak to the media yesterday in Berlin.

Israel, Germany talk Iran

BERLIN Israel's cabinet convened yesterday for the first time in Berlin, the former heart of the Nazi regime, for a special joint session with the German government highlighting the two nations' strong bond six decades after the Holocaust.

Germany's efforts to curb Iran's nuclear ambitions figured high on the agenda, and Chancellor Angela Merkel said her country would back tougher new sanctions against Iran if that country did not change its tune on its nuclear program. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu also pressed hard for sanctions, saying the time has come to confront Iran's Islamic regime.

"The true face of this regime has been unmasked."
Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu on Iran

"The true face of this regime has been unmasked in the year that has just passed ... and we know from recent history that a regime that tyrannizes its own people will tyrannize the world," he said at a joint press conference with Merkel. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

News in brief

NIGERIA Angry Muslim youths set a church filled with worshippers ablaze in northern Nigeria, starting a riot that killed at least 27 people and wounded more than 300 others in the latest religious violence in the region, officials said yesterday. About 5,000 people lost their homes as rioters also burned mosques and homes in Jos, a city that saw more than 300 residents killed during a similar uprising in 2008, said local Red Cross official Auwal Muhammad Madobi.

CHILE Billionaire and now president-elect Sebastian Pinera invoked the calls to service of John F. Kennedy and Barack Obama as he challenged Chileans to come together to improve their country. The conservative businessman, who won Sunday's election by a 52-48 per cent margin over former president Eduardo Frei, vowed to appoint the "best, most prepared, most honest and most dedicated" people to help transform Chile "into the best country in the world."

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Coalcorp says Colombia mine sale threatened
Financially troubled Toronto-based Coalcorp Mining Inc. says the proposed $150-million US sale of its La Francia coal mine in Colombia has been threatened by a company allegedly controlled by former Coalcorp directors. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Business

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On the web

Investing: Allan Small says investors should look to equity markets as interest rates remain low. Visit metronews.ca/investing.
Money Matters: Henry Choo Chong talks about the HST and new homes. Visit metronews.ca/moneymatters.

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SCANLIFE
Will record fees mean an Olympic-sized bust for broadcasters? Not a chance, say some experts. Scan this code for the story.

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Media vets eye Canwest papers

Three veterans of Canada's media industry are taking a swing at buying three Canwest newspapers, including the National Post, in a bid that could force the media conglomerate to consider selling off its assets piece by piece.

The consortium of investors, headlined by former Canadian senator Jerry Grafstein, said yesterday they are only interested in picking up the Post, the Montreal Gazette and the Ottawa Citizen.

If their bid was to succeed, Canwest would have to find someone else to buy the rest of its newspaper operations, which include the Calgary Herald, Edmonton Journal, Victoria Times-Colonist and two Vancouver dailies, the Sun and Province. Canwest has said it believes selling the assets as a whole is a better option.

The latest bid cherry picks from Canwest's basket of newspapers and selects some of those with the largest circulation.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

The troika

- **Jerry Grafstein**, who retired from the senate Jan. 2 after turning 75, was a founder of Citytv in Toronto.
- **Raymond Heard**, 73, is a former Global TV executive and Montreal Star editor.
- **Beryl Wajsman**, 55, is editor of The Suburban, Quebec's biggest English-language weekly and a Liberal insider who testified at the 2005 Gomery inquiry.

Business in brief

MEDIA The Toronto Star and the union representing editorial employees have reached a tentative agreement that could reduce the number of planned layoffs. The agreement, which will be voted on by union members Thursday, will result in up to 35 positions remaining. Page production would be done by newsroom employees. In November, the Star announced plans to cut 70 full-time editing jobs and eight part-time positions.

DEBIT RULES The government's proposed code of conduct for Canada's credit and debit card system is too weighted in favour of merchants at the expense of consumer choice, Visa Canada alleged yesterday, the deadline for comments on the plan. Visa said the code gives merchants the power to decide which debit network is used, overriding a consumer's choice. Rival MasterCard Canada said that overall it supports the objectives of the code.

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Your Money

Shrinking RRSPs

AlisonOnMoney

metronews.ca/alisononmoney

An interesting thing happened on the way to retirement. A bunch of folks lost buckets of money, not just once but many times since 1997. And that explains, in part, why RRSP contributions have fallen off since then, particularly in the 55 and older group.

A new RBC study shows that RRSP contributions, as a percentage of income, have declined among the under-34 crowd as well. But that result is likely because of higher student debt, more expensive housing and higher costs relating to raising a family.

These two age groups, the boomers and the Gen Xers, with their shrinking RRSP contributions, stand to face skinny retirements if they don't ramp up savings. Fat workplace pension plans are increasingly a thing of the past — heck, any workplace pension for that matter. So the average Canadian is going to have to rely on RRSPs to top up old age security and CPP cheques.

Boomers worried about losing retirement money like the last time the market tanked should keep contributing but put less of it in stocks or equity (stock) mutual funds.

No more than 50 per cent of your RRSP funds should be in the market and when you hit your late 50s, the equity portion should shrink steadily until retirement. Instead, think bonds, preferred shares and GICs. I know, interest rates stink, but you are better off earning two or four per cent on your tax-sheltered money than losing 20 or 30 per cent during a downturn.

The younger crowd may protest that their debt leaves no room for RRSP contributions. However, even small amounts deposited regularly at a young age will grow healthily if you don't take on too much stock market risk. As for debt, take the tax refund generated by your contribution every year and dump it on your highest interest debt.

Alison Griffiths is a financial journalist, author and host of Maxed Out on the W Network. Write to her at alison@alisongriffiths.ca.

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Chile..... 2.9 ¢	Nepal...from.....7.9 ¢	Italy.....2.9 ¢
China..... 2.9 ¢	Oman..... 14.9 ¢	Russia...from..... 2.9 ¢
Ecuador.....12.9 ¢	Fiji..... 24.9 ¢	Saudi Arabia from..... 3.9 ¢
El Salvador. ..... 9.9 ¢	Ghana.....9.9 ¢	South Korea.... 2.9 ¢
Jamaica..... 8.9 ¢	Greece.....2.9 ¢	Sri Lanka.....11.9 ¢
Jordan.....3.9 ¢	Guatemala.....10.9 ¢	Trinidad..... 4.9 ¢
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WATCH YESTERDAY'S POST GAME VIDEO!
Featuring replays, interviews and sports commentary at **metronews.ca/Sports**

Sports

Pujols backs McGwire

Albert Pujols, left, supports Mark McGwire, both for acknowledging his use of steroids and in his new role as hitting coach of the St. Louis Cardinals. "I told him I'm proud of him for admitting what he used," Pujols said yesterday at the team's Winter Warm-Up. "Everybody makes mistakes." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

EDITOR: DON.MCHOULL@METRONEWS.CA

FREDERICK BREEDON/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Nashville Predators forward Martin Erat is checked by Toronto Maple Leafs defenceman Garnet Exelby last night Nashville, Tenn. The Leafs won 4-3.

Kessel nets game-winner against Predators

Phil Kessel scored the tiebreaking goal with 5:48 left in the third to give the Toronto Maple Leafs a 4-3 victory over the Nashville Predators last night.

Alexei Ponikarovsky had a goal and assist, and Niklas Hagman and Matt Stajan also scored for the Maple Leafs, who squandered a 3-0 first-period lead.

Marcel Goc, Cody Franson and Ryan Jones scored for Nashville.

Hagman gave Toronto a 1-0 lead 2:02 into the game when he put a shot between the pads of goalie Pekka Rinne.

Ponikarovsky doubled the Maple Leafs' advantage a little more than three minutes later. He skated in front and scored with a backhander that bounced off Rinne and in for a 2-0 lead.

Stajan made it 3-0 at 9:00 when he skated low in the slot and put a backhanded shot past Rinne, who was then replaced. Rinne allowed three goals on eight shots before Dan Ellis took over for the rest of the game.

Kessel has three winning goals this season.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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SCANLIFE

After a busy winter, an energized Mike Weir is looking forward to the PGA season. Scan this code for the story.

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DeRozan rising to the occasion

Raps rookie sets sights on slam-dunk contest

It may seem like a limited-interest curiosity, but the "dunk-off" planned for halftime of the NBA all-star weekend's rookie-sophomore game means plenty to Raptors rookie DeMar DeRozan.

He said he has never lost a dunk contest dating back to high school. The winner of this contest will join the regular Saturday slam-dunk contest against Nate Robinson, Gerald Wallace and Shannon Brown.

While DeRozan ponders his repertoire, his Raptors commence the second half of their season tonight in Cleveland. A recent surge has seen the Raptors lift their record to 21-20, and DeRozan has played a key role.

"I can't ask more from him. He works hard every single day and holds his own against some very tough two-guards in the NBA. His baptism against some of the best players in the league has been very good," said coach Jay Triano.

Although DeRozan had played only one year of college basketball, the Raptors made him a starter.

"It really helped me a lot, putting me out there and helping me grow fast," said DeRozan, who is averaging 20.6 minutes and eight points a night. "Forty-one games into the season, being a starter, I've learned a lot so far. I come in every day, watch film, try to get better and learn something I didn't know previously."

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE PHOTO

Toronto Raptor DeMar DeRozan dunks the ball over New Jersey Net Bobby Simmons earlier this season.

Sports in brief

TENNIS Ana Ivanovic, hoping to rediscover the form that helped her reach two Grand Slam finals in 2008, started her Australian Open campaign today with a 6-2, 6-3 win over American Shenay Perry. Ivanovic saved four break points in the final game before holding serve to take the match.

SURGERY Colorado Avalanche forward Milan Hejduk needs knee surgery and will miss the Vancouver Olympics. Hejduk told The Associated Press yesterday he will not represent the Czech Republic at next month's Games.

HAITI The Haitian earthquake relief fund co-founded by Alonzo Mourning and Miami Heat star Dwyane Wade said yesterday its pledge total has surpassed $800,000 US. Wade's donation was a one-game salary, about $175,000, while Mourning, LeBron James, Kevin Durant and Chris Paul each pledged $100,000, fund officials said.

CFL The Montreal Alouettes re-signed defensive end John Bowman and offensive tackle Jeff Perrett yesterday. Bowman signed a two-year deal with an option. Perrett agreed to a contract extension that will keep him with the CFL club through the 2012 season.

YANKEES The New York Yankees have reached one-year deals with pitchers Chad Gaudin and Boone Logan before going to salary arbitration. Gaudin's agreement yesterday was worth $2.95 million US. Logan's contract was for $590,000.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

SCOREBOARD

NHL

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

TORONTO 4 Nashville 3
Ottawa 5 Boston 1
Buffalo 7 Phoenix 2
Columbus 4 St. Louis 2
Dallas 4 Minnesota 3
Florida 1 Atlanta 0
N.Y. Islanders 4 New Jersey 0
Tampa Bay 3 Carolina 2
Edmonton at Colorado
Calgary at San Jose

TODAY'S GAMES

Tampa Bay at N.Y. Rangers
Columbus at Philadelphia
Detroit at Washington
Toronto at Atlanta
Chicago at Ottawa
N.Y. Islanders at Pittsburgh
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NBA

YESTERDAY'S RESULTS

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San Antonio 97 New Orleans 90
Washington 97 Portland 92
Dallas at Boston
Orlando at L.A. Lakers

TODAY'S GAMES

TORONTO at Cleveland
Indiana at Miami

New name for Super Bowl venue

Sun Life Financial has purchased naming rights to the Miami Dolphins' stadium in time for the Super Bowl. The stadium, called Land Shark Stadium last year, will be renamed in time for the Pro Bowl Jan. 31 and the Super Bowl the following Sunday. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Junior team captain suspended for hit

Junior hockey was making sense of another head-hunting incident yesterday after Mikael Tam of the Quebec Remparts was sent to hospital by an elbow from Rouyn-Noranda centre Patrice Cormier, who captained Canada at the recent world junior hockey championship.

Cormier caught Tam with an elbow while skating through the neutral zone during overtime of Quebec's 3-2 shootout win at Dave Keon Arena in Rouyn-Noranda Sunday afternoon.

The 18-year-old defenceman went into convulsions and was taken to hospital after the hit, where he is listed in stable condition with brain trauma and several damaged teeth.

The Quebec Major Junior Hockey League gave Cormier an indefinite suspension yesterday and will continue to investigate the incident. No timeline was provided on when league disciplinarian Raymond Bolduc will issue a ruling.

DOMINIQUE CHAMBERLAND/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Quebec Remparts player Mikael Tam is wheeled off the ice on a stretcher Sunday following a hit from Rouyn-Noranda's Patrice Cormier during QMJHL action in Rouyn-Noranda, Que.

VideoOnline

View footage of Patrice Cormier's hit on Mikael Tam at metronews.ca/sports

It was the second violent incident in junior hockey in less than a week. Thursday, newly acquired Zack Kassian of the Windsor Spitfires left his feet to flatten Matt Kennedy of the Barrie Colts with what appeared to be a hit to the head.

Kennedy suffered a concussion and required stitches to close facial wounds. Kassian was given a charging major and a game misconduct. He was also suspended indefinitely and is to meet with Ontario Hockey League commissioner Dave Branch today in Windsor. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Blue Jays reach one-year deal with Marcum

The Toronto Blue Jays avoided arbitration with starter Shaun Marcum by agreeing to a $850,000 US, one-year deal yesterday.

The right-hander more than doubled his 2009 salary of $405,200 after spending the year recovering from ligament-replacement surgery at the end of the 2008 season.

He made five rehab starts in the minors, going 0-2 with a 2.30 ERA.

Marcum was 9-7 with a 3.39 ERA in 25 games before he was injured late in his 2008 breakout season. He's 24-17 for his career with a 3.95 ERA in 89 games, 64 of them starts.

"Shaun is doing very well in his recovery and is on schedule to be ready to start the season." Jays GM Alex Anthopoulos

With Roy Halladay gone, Marcum could end up fronting the team's rotation.

"Shaun is doing very well in his recovery and is on schedule to be ready to start the season," GM Alex Anthopoulos wrote in an email.

The Blue Jays have five arbitration-eligible players remaining: Closer Jason Frasor, right-handed relievers Shawn Camp, Casey Janssen and Jeremy Accardo plus left-handed swingman Brian Tallet.

The Jays haven't taken a player to an arbitration hearing since Bill Risley in 1997. With three years of service time behind him, Marcum remains eligible for arbitration after the 2010 and 2011 seasons, then can file for free agency after 2012.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Accident sidelines U.S. snowboarder

American snowboarder Danny Davis has suffered a spinal fracture in an all-terrain-vehicle accident that will end his season and keep him out of next month's Vancouver Olympics. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Vancouver Games

EDITOR: DON.MCHOULL@METRONEWS.CA

Spotlight looms for Crosby

Swing through Canada offers preview of expected Olympic scrutiny

Sidney Crosby hopes his next trip to Vancouver will be a little more memorable.

The Pittsburgh Penguins captain was minus-3 during a 6-2 loss to the Canucks at GM Place Saturday night and failed to record a shot on goal for the first time all season.

He will be pulling on a Maple Leaf sweater when he returns to the city again next month for the Vancouver Games. Despite the rough end to Pittsburgh's five-game road trip, Crosby has been producing of late — putting up four goals and six points during that span.

The upcoming Olympic tournament was a hot topic as Crosby made stops in Calgary, Edmonton and Vancouver. But No. 87 claims it hasn't been difficult to keep his focus on the Penguins.

"If anything, you want your game to be your best when the time comes," Crosby said last week. "The more you worry about doing things right in Pittsburgh, the more that will carry over when the (Olympics start)."

One thing the road swing underlined was just how much scrutiny he will be under at the event. Crosby was subjected to heavy media demands in Western Canada and even had some fans follow his cab to a restaurant when he went out to dinner in Vancouver.

JEFF GROSS/GETTY IMAGES

Sidney Crosby will be in the spotlight when Team Canada takes to the ice next month at the Winter Games in Vancouver.

"If anything, you want your game to be your best when the time comes."
Sidney Crosby

During the Games, the focus will largely be centred around what he does on the ice. That's hasn't been an issue this season as Crosby has already hit the 30-goal plateau for the fourth time in his career.

The only NHL player who has scored more goals than him so far is Team Canada teammate Patrick Marleau, who added three more last week to bring his season total to 32.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Program uses technology in quest for gold

TOP SECRET With the Olympics just around the corner, Canada is finally lifting the lid on some of the cutting-edge projects in its Top Secret program.

Giant treadmills, a cable to catapult speedskaters, and better bodysuits are just part of Top Secret, a program designed to make Canada's Olympians ski, skate and slide faster than the competition at next month's Games.

Over the last five years, almost $8 million has been spent on 55 projects collectively named Top Secret.

OTP, the organization established to help Canada win more medals than any other country at its own Games, paid for Top Secret out of its $117-million budget. THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Survey finds favourable ROI for Ryerson MBA graduates
According to a salary survey of graduates of Ryerson University's MBA program, students who were employed within six months of finishing school earned an average annual salary of $85,327. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Workology

B.C. to offer partial HST rebate

The B.C. government announced last Thursday a rebate program for public bodies, including universities and colleges, to ensure that, on average, these institutions will not pay any more provincial HST after harmonization than they currently pay in PST. When the HST comes into effect July 1, B.C. intends to provide rebates of 75 per cent of the provincial portion of the HST for eligible universities and public colleges. METRO NEWS SERVICES

EDITOR: DOUGLAS.DUNLOP@METRONEWS.CA

Beach Biz

In The Beach, business is more about loyalty than profit margins

Small Business **City**

Each Tuesday, Metro will be focusing on the small businesses within one of Toronto's many neighbourhoods and how they keep their communities humming along.

PHOTOS: RAFAEL BRUSILOW/FOR METRO CANADA

The Wild Earth Café and Bakery opened in the middle of the recession, but thrives in The Beach due to customer loyalty. This trend is common with other neighbourhood small businesses including The Antik Bazaar, top left, Posh, middle left, and Kids At Home.

RAFAEL BRUSILOW
for Metro Canada

With a clientele that is as discerning as it is loyal, small businesses in The Beach thrive on being a part of their customers' daily lives and acting more like good friends than just business operators.

In a tight-knit community of loyal, local-shopping customers like The Beach, carving a niche is crucial and Wild Earth Bakery (2142 Queen St. E.) owner Brad Owens, 36, took the initiative to fill a dietary void he saw at The Beach.

"It's been great so far and they real key to our success has been that we're 100 per cent nut-free and we offer many gluten-free goods too. It's a market niche that was underserved," Owens said.

A former director of health and safety for Bell Canada, Owens opened Wild Earth six months ago at the height of the recession to pursue a lifelong dream. He says the clientele in The Beach is highly loyal so he was worried whether locals would give his bakery a chance but now he feels like a partner in the community.

"This is a community that is extremely loyal, therefore with all the established businesses in the area it's hard to break through but once you do, you're able to build real relationships. We now know our customers by name and we know their lives," Owens said.

Especially in colder months like this one, Owens says businesses in The Beach thrive on repeat customers.

"Once the tourists are gone, these people are your bread and butter, that's why loyalty is so crucial here. There's a real authenticity and genuineness in their support. For me it feels like I'm entertaining in my home," Owens said.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE>>

Workology in **brief**

CANADORE BREAKS GROUND FOR PARRY SOUND CAMPUS: Canadore College held a groundbreaking ceremony Friday for its new Parry Sound, Ont., campus, a project that received over $6 million in governmental funding.

LA CITÉ OPENS CAMPUS IN HAWKESBURY: Last Thursday, La Cité Collégiale officially opened its new campus in Hawkesbury, Ont., at a French-language Catholic high school. The new campus, which focuses on trades programs, is the result of a partnership La Cité struck with the local French-language public and Catholic district school boards. METRO NEWS SERVICES

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New York Times Co. to offer online-education certificates

This spring, the New York Times Company, in conjunction with several colleges, will begin awarding certificates to students who pay to take courses through its online course delivery and networking platform, going beyond its previous involvement focusing on individual, non-credit courses. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Workology in **brief**

ALBERTA: The University of Alberta recently launched a redesigned research website, representing a portal to information, stories, and videos about research from across the institution.

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For the collector

• Sharon Iseman, 63, co-owner of the Antik Bazaar antiques and collectibles store at 2116C Queen St. E., says while the recession has definitely hurt her six-year-old business, her customers' loyalty helped her through.

• "It's been a little more challenging that I thought it would be and the entire business community as a whole has suffered over (the recession), but The Beach has been a good place to be in terms of customers. We end up with very loyal customers who come here before they go anywhere else," Iseman said.

PHOTOS: RAFAEL BRUSILOW/FOR METRO CANADA

Fashion outlet Posh has evolved with The Beach through the years.

Posh passion, fashion first

Small Business **City**

<<CONTINUED FROM LAST PAGE

Lifelong Beacher and entrepreneur Aileen Selkirk, 49, has seen The Beach change much over the past several decades, with her fashion and beauty store Posh (2016 Queen St. E.) changing right along with it.

"I change with the times and my business evolves as the community does. When I was growing up this area was more blue-collar, now it's more professional but still, always, very family oriented," Selkirk said.

She opened Posh, her second store, 20 years ago selling tie-dyed hippie threads and imported clothes; today she focuses on stylish, Canadian-made designer brands and jewelry. Posh has survived and prospered through three different recessions and Selkirk credits the success of her store on her old-school approach to business.

"My staff are like my family and I have very loyal customers who I remember dressing when they were kids — now they dress their own children. It's a very old-fashioned business," Selkirk said.

For the kids

• Marg Gillespie, owner of Kids at Home (2086 Queen St. E.), believes the residents of The Beach harbour a strong loyalty to local businesses because they realize that without their support those businesses couldn't make it.

• "I think the community here has recognized that to keep the shops they love open in this community, they need to shop within it," Gillespie said.

• Gillespie says the best part of selling child and young-adult themed furniture and goods is seeing repeat customers' kids grow up right before her eyes.

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Annual fondue festival

The Bier Markt's annual ME, YÜ, UND FONDÜE Feastivül is on now until Feb. 28. The offerings include cheese, hot broth and chocolate fondue creations. For more information or to view the menu, visit thebiermarkt.com. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Food

Tasty food... and plate

Diane Bisson wants you to clear your plate so you can eat it, too. The Université de Montréal industrial design professor is creating edible plates that are stylish, tasty and environmentally friendly. She focused on using vegetables and vegetable flours, such as water chestnut flour, as well as fruit, beans and bean flours. Bisson tested 400 prototypes. The results are captured in her book, Edible: The Food as Material, which was just released this month. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

EDITOR: ANN-MARIE.COLACINO@METRONEWS.CA

Winter warm-up cuisine

Do you find yourself craving comfort foods now that the cold weather's here?

Instead of pulling out the frozen entrees or resorting to a high-carb meal, try looking for healthy ways to create your old favourites. That way you can warm up without consuming the extra calories.

A perfect example of a comfort meal gone healthy is this week's Almond Crusted Chicken with Honeyed Sweet Potatoes. Breaded chicken fingers are often found in family freezers because they taste great and appeal to people of all ages. However, these frozen treats are high in fat and carbohydrates, meaning they're not the best choice for you or your family. Check out caloriecount.about.com and search breaded chicken for more nutritional information.

To avoid the extra fat and carb content in this meal, our recipe developer blends whole-wheat breadcrumbs and almonds to give these healthy chicken fingers a nutty coating that delivers plenty of good-for-you vitamin E and fibre.

Last but not least, our light Two-Bite Cheesecakes are delicious and filling — the perfect way to finish your meal on a sweet note.

- CHRISTY PENGILLY

PHOTOS BY CARLO MENDOZA

20 Minute Supper Club's Almond Crusted Chicken with Honeyed Sweet Potatoes, above, and Two-Bite cheesecake, right.

Almond Crusted Chicken with Honeyed Sweet Potatoes

SERVES 4
PREP TIME: 10 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 20 MINUTES
RECIPE DEVELOPER: PAULA BOWMAN

INGREDIENTS:

- olive oil cooking spray
- 1 egg white
- 1 Tbsp cold water
- 1/3 cup raw almonds
- 3/4 cup fresh whole wheat breadcrumbs, (about 2 slices bread)
- 1 Tbsp fresh parsley
- 2 Tbsp finely grated lemon zest
- 1/2 Tbsp kosher salt plus more for sweet potatoes
- 1/4 tsp fennel seed
- 1 1/2 skinless chicken breasts, (about 1 1/2 lbs)
- 1 1/2 pound sweet potatoes, peeled and cut into 1-inch slices
- 2 Tbsp honey, plus more for garnish, if desired
- 1/4 tsp lemon juice
- pinch nutmeg

METHOD:

1. Preheat oven to 400F. Line a rimmed sheet pan with tinfoil, lightly spray foil with cooking spray and set aside.

2. Whisk egg white with water until frothy, transfer to a shallow bowl and set aside.

3. In the small bowl of a food processor, combine almonds, breadcrumbs, parsley, 1/2-teaspoon salt, lemon zest and fennel seed and pulse until finely chopped. Transfer almond mixture to a shallow bowl.

4. Cut each chicken breast lengthwise into 6 strips and season pieces with salt and pepper. One at a time, dip chicken pieces in egg white, allowing the excess egg white to fall back into the bowl, then dredge in almond mixture until well coated on all sides. Transfer to prepared sheet pan, lightly spray top of chicken with olive oil spray and bake in oven until cooked through and golden brown, about 12 to 15 minutes.

6. Meanwhile, place sweet potatoes in a saucepan and cover with salted water. Bring to a boil over high heat and cook until sweet potatoes are tender, about 12 to 14 minutes. Reserve 1/2 cup cooking liquid, drain sweet potatoes and mash with fork or potato masher. Sweet potatoes can also be placed in a food processor and pureed until smooth.

7. Add honey, lemon juice, nutmeg and 1/4-cup reserved cooking liquid and stir until combined. Add more liquid, as necessary until desired consistency. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Serve chicken with mashed sweet potatoes. Serve some honey on the side for dipping or drizzle honey over chicken to garnish.

Healthier options

Make your favourite winter warm-up foods healthier with these tips:

- Use squash soup on potatoes instead of gravy
- Use lemon on your veggies instead of salt
- Try plain yogurt instead of sour cream in recipes

20 MINUTE SUPPER CLUB

Two-Bite Cheesecakes

MAKES APPROXIMATELY 15 CAKES
PREP TIME: 15 MINUTES
COOKING TIME: 30 MINUTES
RECIPE DEVELOPER: PAULA BOWMAN

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 250-g packages cream cheese, room temperature (Can use light cream cheese)
- 1/2 cup granulated sugar
- 1/2 tsp vanilla
- 1 Tbsp lemon juice
- pinch salt
- 2 eggs

METHOD:

1. Preheat oven to 325 F.

2. Place standard-sized muffin cups into a muffin tin. Using an electric mixer, blend cream cheese with all ingredients until smooth and fill each with 1/4 cup of cheese mixture. Bake for 25 minutes.

3. Cool and decorate.

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Merlot's merit

Funny thing about merlot; even after being looked down on by critics and so famously bad-mouthed in the movie Sideways the grape is still the best selling piece of fruit on the vine.

The reason is three fold: Its name is easy to pronounce, there's plenty of variety because it's grown just about everywhere there's dirt and it's a pretty forgiving berry, which makes it hard for winemakers to screw-up the juicy, easy-drinking personality that has become its hallmark.

The grape's also a no-brain fallback position when you need an all-purpose food wine. Whether it's pasta with a tomato-based sauce, pork chops, poultry, anything beefy or a simple takeout pizza — merlot's your match.

Back to Sideways, though California's reputation as a mass producer of merlot led to the on-screen backlash, its winemakers know how to bottle good juice at a decent price. While **The Little Black Dress 2008 Merlot** ($12.99 - $14.99) may be playing up to the growing legions of female wine drinkers with its fashion-forward name, it delivers plenty of manly cherry berry flavours.

The same goes for **McWilliam's 2007 Hanwood Estate Merlot** ($14.95 - $16.99) from Down Under. It nicely pairs round wood with dense black fruit.

Prices reflect the range across the country. Products may not be available in every province.

Peter Rockwell is the everyman's wine writer, working in the liquor industry for more than 25 years and travelling the globe looking for something to fill his glass and put into words.

SPECIAL FOCUS ON:
Dental Health

Health & Beauty

Whiter not always better for teeth

Doctor suggests doing your homework before investing in bleaching agents

CELIA MILNE
for Metro Canada

So you want whiter teeth? There are plenty of ways to get a brighter smile. And Canadians are gleaming from ear to ear as whitening products explode onto drug store shelves.

But before you jump on the mega-watt-smile bandwagon, make sure this is how you want to spend your money and time.

"Tooth whitening is a bit of a luxury," says Dr. Benoit Soucy, director of clinical and scientific affairs at the Canadian Dental Association in Ottawa. "To a large extent it is similar to a lot of fashion trends. For most people it is not needed. It's like, 'Why go on a diet if you are in a healthy weight range'?"

Another thing to keep in mind: "It is not always a good idea to go for the whitest possible teeth. It draws attention to the teeth and shows up flaws," he says.

Metro asked Soucy to guide us through the various whitening options. By and large, bleaching your teeth is safe, as long as you get your teeth checked first by a dentist, don't overdo it, and follow instructions carefully.

Get your teeth checked first by your dentist before buying a bleaching kit.

The cheapest products are toothpastes and mouth washes that promise whiter teeth. These are safe but probably won't make a huge difference, says Soucy. "Whitening toothpastes don't change the colour of your teeth; they simply remove the surface stains," he says.

Next up are whitening kits you can buy at the pharmacy. These contain either whitening strips, materials to paint the bleach onto your teeth, or trays that you fill with a bleaching agent and mold to your mouth. These kits typically cost between $10 and $100.

A more expensive option is to get custom-made trays at the dentist's office. Because these fit exactly, there is less chance of spillage and swallowing peroxide bleach. Treatments can be done at home using these custom-made trays. This option may cost between $250 and $600.

For a super-fast, super efficient whitening treatment, there's a light-activated gel treatment at the dentist's office. This may set you back between $600 and $2,000, but your teeth will sparkle after usually just one visit.

"To a large extent it is similar to a lot of fashion trends. For most people it is not needed. It's like, 'Why go on a diet if you are in a healthy weight range'?"
Dr. Benoit Soucy, Canadian Dental Association

There are several benefits of having whitening done at the dentist: First of all, you will get any problems fixed before you begin; secondly, your dentist will examine you to find out if bleaching will achieve the results you want; thirdly, he or she will make sure the procedure can be done safely; and, finally, the dentist will be there if you feel any irritation or sensitivity.

Follow manufacturer's instructions carefully. Don't accelerate the process or continue longer than advised. Over-bleaching can irritate your gums and even create chemical burns on the tongue.

Cheese and wine can help teeth

STUDY Wine and cheese. There may be a medical reason why these go so well together.

A new German study suggests that white wine is very hard on your teeth, but eating cheese while sipping your wine helps neutralize the effects.

It is the acid in white wine that wears away enamel, say researchers at Johannes Gutenberg University. Their experiment took place in a laboratory. They soaked adult teeth in white wine for a day, and found the teeth had a significant loss of calcium and phosphorus in the enamel surface. Riesling had an especially dramatic effect on the teeth, which could lead to problems in the long-term. Red wines such as Pinot Noir did not damage the enamel as much. Eating cheese at the same time as drinking white wine could counter the effects.

CELINA MILNE/
FOR METRO CANADA

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Adult braces offer options

Many patients in their 40s and 50s now getting teeth treated

CELIA MILNE
for Metro Canada

"I can smile. I feel like smiling." That is often the reaction of adults who have finished with braces, says Dr. Peter Gold from Orthodontics for Adults in Toronto.

With many custom-designed and computer-generated options these days, more and more grown-ups are getting their teeth moved and improved, says Gold, who specializes in braces for adults.

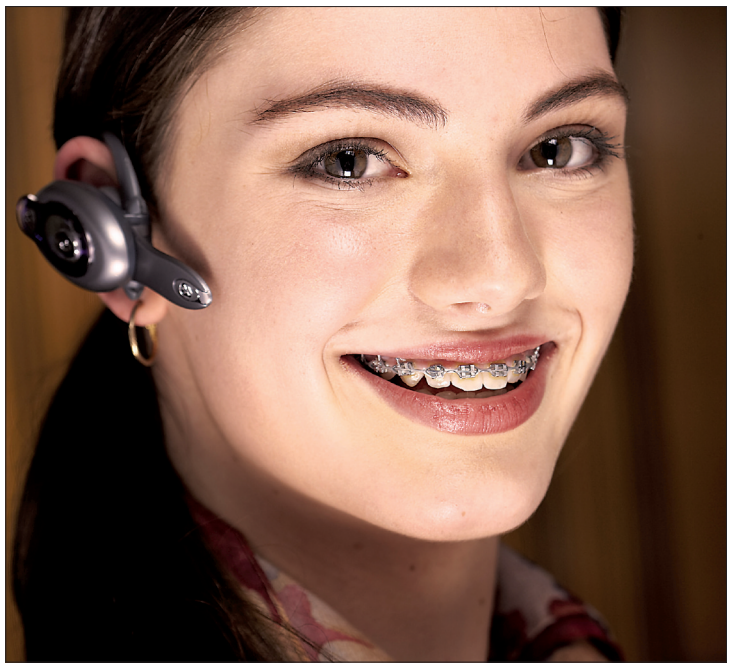
"There has been an increase in the number of adults getting braces over the last 10 to 15 years," says Gold, who has been practising in mid-town Toronto for 30 years.

In particular, these days more men are embracing braces. "It makes sense. They are maintaining their vitality and strength and looking after their health. They go to the gym. They are not over the hill. They feel good and they want to look good."

Braces can reverse problems such as crowding, protruding, crookedness, a big space between the teeth, an overbite, or an underbite.

You're never too old for braces, believes Gold. "My oldest patient was 82 and her teeth moved just fine." He also sees many patients, both men and women, in their 20s, 30s, 40s and 50s. "They have some income and are able to make their own decisions. Not everyone had the opportunity for braces when they were children."

Braces have changed a lot since the days when the only option was metallic train tracks and little yellow elastics. Invisalign is one of the new developments. In this treatment, computer-designed aligners are placed over the teeth. They are like horseshoe-shaped trays, and they are clear. Invisalign is particularly good for moderate problems or tweaking, says Gold. "It is comfortable, doesn't show and you can take it out for special occasions."



Braces are no longer the metallic train tracks and yellow elastics — they're often invisible to the eye.

Adult braces becoming more common

Clear braces are another option. They blend in with the natural colour of the teeth, so they aren't as noticeable as metal braces.

Inside braces — which are now computer-designed — are invisible from the outside.

Adults who go for braces these days will probably see a 3-D computer simulation of how they will look when the treatment is finished. "Braces used to be one-size-fits-all," says Gold. "More and more, we have custom solutions for each patient. Instead of braces being off-the-shelf, they are tuned for each person."

Orthodontic procedures for adults can take anywhere from six months to — in extremely complicated cases — three years. Typically, treatment takes between six and 18 months. Cost varies tremendously, says Gold, and can range anywhere from $1,000 to $15,000 if the patient has a severe problem and needs surgery.

The benefits of braces include looking younger, prolonging the life of your teeth, and in some cases actually improving the functioning of the mouth. Adult patients are a pleasure to treat, says Gold. "They're motivated, they brought themselves here, they are paying, and they are very compliant."

Health in brief

TOOTHBRUSH Save the planet while you brush your teeth. In order to save water, the Eco-Dentistry Association suggests that instead of letting the water continually run down the drain while we brush our teeth, we start a new habit. Wet your toothbrush, turn off the tap, brush your teeth, and then rinse from a small glass of water. The average person wastes 90 glasses of water a day while brushing their teeth, according to this international association of environmentally-astute dental professionals, based in Berkeley, Calif.

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AMERICAN RED CROSS

Winnie Romeril, American Red Cross, International Disaster Response Volunteer, carries Estphane Shan towards a First Aid Post in in Croix Desprez, Poort-au-Prince, Haiti.

Haiti at risk of disease spreading

Haiti Crisis

DISEASE Still reeling from the devastation wrought by this week's earthquake, the people of Haiti now face another foe, unseen but potentially just as deadly.

Pestilence, one of the apocalyptic horsemen that follow in the wake of any natural disaster, is silently lurking, waiting to strike.

Contaminated water, untreated festering wounds and disease-carrying insects could all combine to further ravage the population with a host of diseases, experts say.

"It's a very serious problem and there could be in theory — and it's only theoretical — there could be thousands of people who do badly, they die or become very ill," said Dr. Jay Keystone, a tropical disease expert at Toronto General Hospital.

The impoverished country has been plagued by water- and mosquito-borne diseases for years, in large part because of poor health-care and inadequate infrastructure, said Keystone. "But what's going to happen now, because the water (supply) is interrupted, because they're not going to have purified water, then you run the risk of enteric, or gastrointestinal, infections."

"They don't have cholera there, but they have E. coli and a whole bunch of other ones," he said, listing salmonella, shigella and campylobacter among the bugs that can wreak havoc on the intestines of people already weakened by trauma and lack of food.

"So you may see major outbreaks of enteric disease, and that could be a major problem over the next few weeks."

Dr. Bonnie Henry, an infectious disease expert at the B.C. Centres for Disease Control in Vancouver, said E. coli can be among the most deadly.

Carried in feces, the bacteria can end up contaminating both water and food, she said.

"There are many different types of E. coli, so it causes everything from just an explosive, watery diarrhea to a very severe infection with bloody diarrhea and kidney failure."

Typhoid, caused by a strain of salmonella, is also a huge worry in Haiti, noted Keystone. "That can be very severe and in theory they could have outbreaks of typhoid occurring very soon, again because they're not going to have access to clean food and water." THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Other threats

- Another threat from unclean water is the bacterium leptospirosis, which can cause infection through the skin. Carried by animals like rats and dogs, the pathogen is usually a problem that arises during widespread flooding.
- Leptospirosis can cause high fever, meningitis, lung problems and severe kidney disease.
- Mosquito-borne diseases like malaria and dengue fever, which are endemic to the island nation, could also pose a risk. But fortunately, the earthquake struck during the dry season when breeding of the insects is minimal.
- Still, dengue-carrying mosquitoes could find breeding grounds in small pockets of dirty water littered in the destruction of Port-au-Prince — even tin cans.

Diabetes rate higher in First Nations: Study

HEALTH A 25-year study shows rates of diabetes among aboriginals have been rising at an alarming rate, especially for women of child-bearing age.

The study led by researchers at the University of Saskatchewan found the incidence of diabetes is more than four times higher in First Nations women compared to non-First Nations women.

For men, the rate of new diabetes cases in aboriginals is well over double that of non-aboriginal men. The study of Saskatchewan residents found new diabetes cases peak in aboriginals between ages 40 and 49, compared to a peak age of 70-plus in non-aboriginals.

Principal researcher Dr. Roland Dyck says aboriginal women in particular suffer from diabetes, with high rates among those 20- to 49-years-old. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Study

- The authors of the study published in the Canadian Medical Association Journal say strategies to cut the diabetes rate among Canada's aboriginals should target pregnant women, children and young adults.
- The study found that the rate of diabetes is four times higher in First Nations women.

Got sex on the brain?

Sketchy statistics hard to swallow, says book

The J Spot
Josey Vogels
metronews.ca/thejspot

According to a recent poll of 3,000 people by online marketing firm onepoll.com, men think of sex 13 times a day, or 4,745 times a year.

Seem like a lot? Well, that's nothing compared to thinking about it every 52 seconds as Dr. Louann Brizendine claims they do in her book The Female Brain. Other results through the years have placed the frequency of men's sexual thoughts everywhere from "every three minutes," to "every 15 seconds" with "every seven seconds" topping the heap.

In their book Don't Swallow Your Gum: Myths, Half-Truths, and Outright Lies About Your Body and Health pediatricians Dr. Aaron Carroll or Dr. Rachel Vreeman point out just how ludicrous this latter seven-second claim is.

"If we assume that the average male is awake for 16 hours a day, each man would have to think about sex more than 8,000 times a day. That's about as many times as a person breathes while awake," they write.

It's not just the math that makes these claims ridiculous. How can you accurately calculate how often someone thinks about sex in a day anyway? After all, if a poll asked you to keep track of how often you think about sex, wouldn't you then be thinking about how often you think about sex, and therefore be thinking about sex constantly, thus skewing the results? Which raises another problem with these claims: What exactly constitutes a sexual thought?

How often women think about sex is the subject of a new book.

So what's the point of our constant obsession with how often men have who-knows-what-kind-of-fleeting thoughts about sex?

The only thing these sketchy statistics ever seem to want to prove is that men have more who-knows-how-fleeting sexual thoughts than women. By comparison, in the onepoll.com poll, women think of sex just five times a day or 1,825 times per year.

And compared to once every 52 seconds in Brizendine's book, women only think of it once a day.

Instead of constantly perpetuating this ultimately unfounded idea that all men are walking around with nothing but sex on the brain while women — with their dearth of dirty thoughts — are clearly more sexually repressed, wouldn't it be a lot more helpful to have more quality-over-quantity analysis about the nature of men's and women's sexual thoughts?

Then again, if that were the case, what would lame comedians and sitcom writers come up with as a premise for all their jokes?

Josey Vogels is a sex and relationship columnist and author of five books on the subjects. For more info, visit joseyvogels.com.

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model photo

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Water retention makes you bloat

Weight loss is not only about increasing metabolism to burn fat. Water retention also makes you feel overweight and bloated. Your fingers swell, your ankles look and feel heavy, pants fit tighter and your bra may become uncomfortably snug.

What is the cause? For most of us, we are simply victims of high-sodium processed foods and salty snacks. But women are additionally at risk for water retention, doctors say, because of the rise and fall of hormone levels.

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*This testimonial is one user's personal experience and is not meant as a generalization. New Nordic recommends a healthy diet and exercise in order to lose weight.

Screening for obesity

U.S. panel suggests treating children early

An influential advisory panel says school-aged youngsters and teens should be screened for obesity and sent to intensive behaviour treatment if they need to lose weight — a move that could transform how doctors deal with overweight children.

Obesity has been linked to diabetes in the past.

Treating obese kids can help them lose weight, the panel of doctors said in issuing new guidelines Monday. But that's only if it involves rigorous diet, activity and behaviourcounselling.

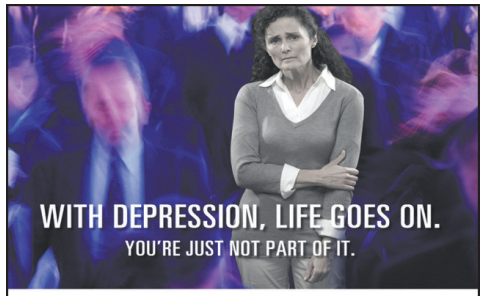
Just five years ago, the same panel — the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force — found few benefits from pediatric obesity programs. Since then, the task force said, studies have shown success. But that has only come with treatment that is costly, hard to find and hard to follow.

The good news is, "you don't have to throw your arms up and say you can't do anything," said task force chairman Dr. Ned Calonge. "This is a recommendation that says there are things that work."

Calonge said the panel recognizes that most pediatricians are not equipped to offer the necessary kind of treatment, and that it may be hard to find, or afford, places that do. The recommendations merely highlight scientific evidence showing what type of programs work — "not whether or not those services are currently available," he said.

The new advice, published online in the journal Pediatrics, could serve as a template for creating obesity programs. It also might remove one important cost barrier: Calonge said insurers will no longer be able to argue that they won't provide coverage because treatment programs don't work. Evidence the panel evaluated shows intensive treatment can help children lose several pounds — enough for obese kids to drop into the "overweight" category, making them less prone to diabetes and other health problems. The treatment requires appointments at least once or twice a week for six months or more.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS



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Cowell pulls in Paul for X-Factor
Simon Cowell is recruiting his former American Idol judge, Paula Abdul, to join him on the judging panel of his upcoming Fox talent show X-Factor, according to The Hollywood Reporter. EW.COM

Entertainment

Tobey the Hobbit?
Tobey Maguire has reportedly agreed to take the lead role in The Hobbit. The 34-year-old actor is said to have signed up to play Bilbo Baggins in the movie adaptation of JRR Tolkien's classic book. FEMALEFIRST.CO.UK

EDITOR: DEAN.LISK@METRONEWS.CA

Globe no sign of Oscar glory

Sunday's wins not best indicator of Academy picks

STEVE GOW
for Metro Canada

Hollywood Votes
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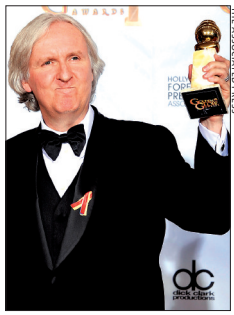

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Jeff Bridges, left, may have won best actor (drama) and James Cameron best director at the Golden Globes, but that doesn't mean they will have their categories locked up come Oscar night.

It would've meant a lot to the director of A Single Man to see Colin Firth beat out Jeff Bridges at Sunday's Golden Globe Awards. Alas, it was not to be.

"Live by the buzz, die by the buzzsaw," said fashion designer-turned-filmmaker Tom Ford. "I've been saying it all morning, but it's true."

While Firth may have heard that buzzsaw coming, it doesn't mean he'll go unnoticed by the time the Academy Awards roll around however. Even though the Hollywood Foreign Press Association (which hosts the Golden Globes) has often forecast future Oscar winners, it possibly may be less so clairvoyant this year.

"It's tricky to call any of the precursor shows influences on the Oscars," said Steve Pond, author of The Odds, an awards-based column on popular Hollywood industry website The Wrap. "(The Golden Globe voters) don't really have any critical credibility and they don't have careers in the industry the way the Oscar voters do, so it's a popular vote among this group that's sort of lucked into having influence for a couple weeks each year because their TV show gets good ratings."

By comparison, the Oscars, to be held March 7, are an industry-based awards where members of the Academy can cast unpredictable votes.

"Most of the Oscar voters in the acting categories are actors of substantial achievement themselves, so they're not going to vote for people just because they want to see them up there on the podium."

Toss in the fact that the Oscars will feature ten best picture nominees this year, and the winner of the top prize only becomes less calculable.

Either way, with the passing of The Golden Globes, one cannot deny that the official Oscar race has begun. So one wonders, with weekly award shows tracking who's getting the most hardware, what is the greatest predictor of Oscar wins?

"The Director's Guild, The Producer's Guild, The Screen Actor's Guild," said Pond. "Those guilds tell you how people who work in the industry are thinking."

While that's promising news for Firth, Tom Ford admits he is one person just satisfied to see his star nominated.

"Awards recognition drives people to the theatre," said Ford.

"(The Golden Globe voters) don't really have any critical credibility and they don't have careers in the industry the way the Oscar voters do."
The Wrap's Steve Pond

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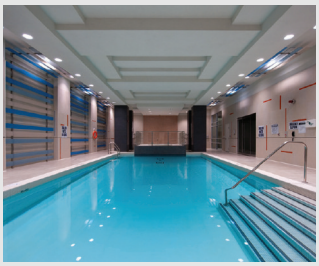
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DVD picks

Cairo Time

Director: Ruba Nadda

LOVE IS A many-splendoured but also highly cerebral thing in Cairo Time, the winner of the Canadian feature prize at TIFF '09.

Recalling Brief Encounter and Lost in Translation by displaying the mind as the most sensual of human instruments, the film searches for romance and meaning amidst the grandeur and challenges of modern Egypt.

Patricia Clarkson is Juliette, a Canadian magazine writer who travels to Cairo to see her husband Mark (Tom McCamus), a UN diplomat stationed in the Middle East.

The happily married couple have long talked about taking a trip together to the Pyramids.

But workaholic Mark is assisting at a Gaza refugee camp and can't yet meet his spouse, so he asks his faithful friend Tareq (Alexander Siddig) to keep Juliette company.

Of such small seeds are mighty oaks of infidelity grown. But Montreal writer/director Ruba Nadda avoids the obvious, preferring to explore how geography, circumstance and fate can combine to test even the strongest of wills.

Is something happening between Juliette and Tareq? It's hard to say, sometimes frustratingly so, because both characters are hard to read and the attraction isn't obvious.

They play the "what if" game as they make their way through the streets of Cairo and surrounding deserts.

Clarkson and Siddig make the most of a script that delivers less than it promises.

The Invention of Lying

Director: Ricky Gervais/ Matthew Robinson

BRITISH COMIC Ricky Gervais makes his feature writing/directing debut (with co-writer and co-director Matthew Robinson) of a comic fantasy that might be called Charlie Kaufman lite. It has the surrealism of a Kaufman picture, but few of the weighty thoughts.

The gag is an alternate world where people are simply incapable of telling a falsehood. Everyone has their sincerity switch set at brutal honesty, including Jennifer (Jennifer Garner), the cutie Mark is trying to woo.

Then one day Mark discovers that he actually can tell fibs, and that people will believe his wildest stories. Suddenly life takes a turn for the interesting.

The small marvel of The Invention of Lying is that it manages to sustain this joke for much of the movie, although it never really takes it very far.

Peter Howell/for Metro Canada

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Supporters protest Tonight Show move
Conan O'Brien supporters are gathering at Universal Studios in Hollywood to protest NBC's treatment of the late night host. The protest — which gained support on Facebook — took place near The Tonight Show studio. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Mix of Six

MUSICAL The Broadway tour of Rent is now being performed at the Canon Theatre, 244 Victoria St. mirvish.com.

CONCERT Musical twins Tegan And Sara perform with opening act An Horse at Massey Hall, 178 Victoria St., at 8 p.m. ticketmaster.ca.

THEATRE Angels In America: Millennium Approaches is being performed at Dancemakers Centre for Creation, 55 Mill St., Bldg 58, Studio 313. column13.org.

COMEDY Yuk Yuk's Downtown, 224 Richmond St. W., presents amateur night at the Humber College Comedy Cavalcade. yukyuks.com.

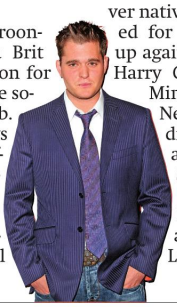
BENEFIT The "C" Word, a benefit for Gilda's Club featuring all-female stand-up comedy, takes place at Hugh's Room, 2261 Dundas St. W. 416-531-6604.

SCREENING The film Earth 2100 will be screened followed by a discussion on climate change, at the Annette Library, 145 Annette St., at 6:30 p.m. Details at green13toronto.blogspot.com.

Bublé nabs Brit nom

MUSIC It's not a bad time to be Michael Bublé.

The Canadian crooner has nabbed a Brit Awards nomination for international male solo artist at the Feb. 16 show. The news comes weeks after Bublé announced his engagement to 22-year-old Argentine model Luisana Lopilato.



The 34-year-old Vancouver native is also nominated for a Grammy. He's up against Tony Bennett, Harry Connick, Jr., Liza Minnelli and Willie Nelson for best traditional pop vocal album at the Jan. 31 show.

Buble released his fourth studio album, Crazy Love, in October. THE CANADIAN PRESS

In brief

TV NBC says its Golden Globes broadcast, hosted by British actor-comedian Ricky Gervais, won a ratings prize — a 14 per cent increase in viewers from last year. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Clarification

- The movie High Life was not identified as a new release in Metro's weekend movie listings. The film is currently in theatres.

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Travolta to the rescue

John Travolta has arranged a plane to fly aid to the victims of the Haiti earthquake. The actor — who is a qualified pilot — acted quickly to organize the help for the Caribbean country. FEMALEFIRST.CO.UK

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Workman Meats match

Latest album inspired by The Flaming Lips and Mercury Rev

ROB MCMAHON
for Metro Canada

Singer-songwriter Hawksley Workman has two new albums, Meat, which is available today, and a second Euro pop album called Milk, which will have a full release in April.

Titling a pair of albums Meat and Milk is a statement.

For Hawksley Workman, it signals a suite of aggressive, masculine songs that are balanced with a corresponding vulnerability.

For example, You Don't Just Want to Break Me is a "lucky moment" captured on record — an intense performance coaxed from Workman by his co-producer and studio engineer Stew Crookes. The pair was drinking beers in the studio, brainstorming how to approach the vocal delivery. Originally written in Tazmania, the track was conceived on a long walk home after a particularly aggressive Nick Cave concert.

"I wanted the song to be on par with (Nick Cave's) delivery. I never sing notes that high, so they are the result of me being a bit inebriated in the studio, and trying that. It does something to my voice — tightens it up a bit," he said. "I'm a bit worried about how to perform that song live ... Stew (Crookes) is a guru — one of those guys who always has the recording button engaged at the right time."

Compared to its counterpart, Milk (which was produced in Stockholm by an "electro-pop guru"), Meat is a banging record that often recalls TV on the Radio or Justice. Workman said the album's sound was inspired in part by Crookes' hero David Friedman, who crafted the sound of neo-psychedelic groups like The Flaming Lips and Mercury Rev.

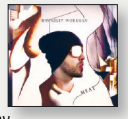
The goal was to apply Friedman's style to a "bombastic, belligerent sound," and the resulting mix of intensity and tenderness comes across in songs like Depress My Hangover, where gospel singers counterpoint gritty production. Workman grew up listening to Motown, and wanted the song, which tells a story of a couple living in a cheap downtown apartment "locked away from the self-importance of the outside world" and drinking away their days, to reflect that spiritual passion.

Perhaps the cleanest-sounding song on the record is album opener Song for Sarah Jane. Recorded backstage at the Union Chapel, an old church in London, England, Workman wrote the song for his friend Sarah Jane.

"I was sitting backstage there, and recorded that song there using a little handheld recorder," said Workman. "I played the song on a piano backstage, while the tech guys were loading a PA onto the stage — that's what you hear (in the background). I knew there was no way I'd be able to record it again like that, it was so honest, so I kept that version."

Fresh Meat

- Hawksley Workman's new album Meat is available in stores and online today.



1/19/10	Vu	SD	C		7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00
primetime	265	353	2	TVO	The End of Suburbia		The Agenda With Steve Paikin		Criminal Justice (N)		Story of Maths		Agenda-Paikin
	211	331	3	GTV	ET Canada	Entertainment	NCIS "The Inside Man"		NCIS: Los Angeles		The Good Wife (HDTV)		News Hour
	215	343	4	OMN1	Two/Half Men	The Office	Omni News: Italian Edition (N)		Vivere V	Omni News:	Law & Order: Criminal Intent		Metropia
	210	302	6	CBC	Wheel Fortune	Jeopardy! (N)	Rick Mercer	22 Minutes (N)	Kids in-Hall	Comedy	CBC News: The National		The Hour
	214	344	7	CITY	Law & Order: Special Victims		The Biggest Loser A contestant threatens to quit. (N)				The Jay Leno Show (N)		News
	212	313	8	CTV	etalk	Access H.	American Idol (HDTV) (N)		Human Target "Pilot"		Law & Order: SVU		CTV News
	218	345	11	CHCH	*Baby Boom* ★★★ (1987, Comedy) Diane Keaton.				*Bright Lights, Big City* ★★ (1988, Drama) Michael J. Fox.				News at 11 (N)
	-	-	14	-	Family Guy	The Simpsons	Omni News: S. Asian Edition		Omni News: Cantonese Edition		Two/Half Men	King	Cold Case
	213	326	15	SUN	The Insider (N)	George Lopez	World's Most Amazing Videos		To Serve and Protect		The Insider	Hitchcock Pres	Becker
	-	387	16	CBS	Inside Edition	Access H.	NCIS "The Inside Man"		NCIS: Los Angeles		The Good Wife (HDTV)		News 4 at 11
	-	385	17	NBC	The Insider (N)	Entertainment	The Biggest Loser A contestant threatens to quit. (N)				The Jay Leno Show (N)		News
	-	386	18	ABC	Wheel Fortune	Jeopardy! (N)	Scrubs	Better Off Ted	Scrubs	Better Off Ted	the forgotten (HDTV)		News
	219	346	20	ACH-B	Degrassi: TNG	TMZ (N)	*X2: X-Men United* ★★★ (2003, Fantasy) Patrick Stewart, Hugh Jackman, Ian McKellen.						A News
	-	-	28	FOX	Judge Judy (N)	Two/Half Men	American Idol (HDTV) (N)		Human Target "Pilot"		Seinfeld	Two/Half Men	The Simpsons
	-	388	61	PBS	PBS NewsHour	Foot in Grave	Nova (HDTV) (N) (DVS)		Frontline (HDTV) (N)		American Future: A History		Business Rpt.
	297	652	330	WPX	Two/Half Men	Family Guy	90210 (HDTV)		Melrose Place (HDTV)		PIX News at Ten Tong.		Two/Half Men
	296	654	331	SBK	The Insider (N)	Entertainment	Law & Order: Special Victims		WBZ News (N)	'70s Show	Frasier	Frasier	The Office
	298	653	332	TLA	The Tyra Show		According/Jim	Family Guy	KTLA News	KTLA News	Two/Half Men	Two/Half Men	90210
news	502	390	26	NW	Connect Today's biggest stories. (N)				CBC News: The National		CBC News: the fifth estate		National
	500	500	33	CNN	Situation Room-Wolf Blitzer		Campbell Brown (N)		Larry King Live (N)		Anderson Cooper 360 (HDTV)		
	509	504	79	CNB	Kudlow Report (Live)		Biography on CNBC		Warren Buffett and Bill Gates		Inside the Mind of Google		Mad Money
sports	405	417	22	net	PartyPoker.net		MMA Conn	UFC: Access	The Ultimate Fighter		Sportsnet Connected		Hockey Central
	400	400	30	TSN	NBA Basketball Toronto Raptors at Cleveland Cavaliers. (HDTV) (Live)					AHL Hockey All-Star Game. (HDTV) From Portland, Maine.			
	411	457	58	OLN	Ghost Hunters		Destination Truth		Oper. Repo	Oper. Repo	Ghost Hunters		Destin. Truth
	417	406	81	SC	Barrett-Jackson Automobile Auction (HDTV) From Westworld Scottsdale, Ariz. (Live)								
family	551	542	25	YTV	iCarly	Fries That?	Malcolm-Mid.	Hates Chris	8 Simple Rules	What I Like	Family Biz	To Be Indie	Prank Patrol
	554	544	45	TEL	Scooby-Doo	Total Drama	Total Drama	6TEEN	Futurama	King of the Hill	American Dad	Futurama	Robot Chicken
	556	540	51	FAM	Sonny Chance	Suite Life	Overruled!	Han. Montana	Wizards-Place	Latest Buzz	Ned's School	Cory in House	That's-Raven
cable variety	602	567	27	W	Supernanny		Dine With Me	Grocery Bag	Beauty	Style by Jury	How to Look Good Naked		Beauty
	570	580	29	MM	To Be Announced		Love Court	My Date With...	Degrassi: TNG	Degrassi: TNG	disBAND	Love Court	MuchOnDem
	615	520	31	A&E	Criminal Minds "In Heat"		Criminal Minds (HDTV)		Psychic Kids: Paranormal		Paranormal	Paranormal Cops (N)	
	700	800	35	TLN	Centrovetrine	Sky TG 24	Magnifica Italia	David Rocco	RIS - Delitti Imperfetti		George Lopez	George Lopez	Lopez Tonight
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	575	583	38	CMT	Amer. Funniest Home Videos		Reba	Reba	According-Jim	According-Jim	Home Improve.	Home Improve.	This Is It
	616	521	39	SHO	Relic Hunter		*Accidental Friendship* (2008, Drama) Chandra Wilson.				Drop Dead Diva (N)		NCIS
	620	523	40	BVO	In the Shadow of the Blues		Live at the Rehearsal Hall		Audience Neil Diamond		At the Concert Hall (N)		Law & Order
	601	562	41	SLC	Rich Poor	Rich Poor	Party Mamas	Party Mamas	Party Mamas	Wedding SOS	Wedding SOS	Wedding SOS	ET Canada
	522	506	43	HIS	Ancient Discoveries		Cities of the Underworld		Pawn Stars (N)	Pawn Stars (N)	Ancients Behaving Badly		Crime Stories
	625	548	44	COM	Air Farce	22 Minutes	Corner Gas	Name Is Earl	The Simpsons	South Park	Jeff Dunham	Blue Collar TV	Daily Show
	600	564	46	H&G	House Hunters	Property Virgin	Million Dollar Listing (N)		Bang, Buck	Genevieve	House Hunters	House Hunters	Holmes-Homes
	294	529	47	TBS	Family Guy	Family Guy	House-Payne	House-Payne	Law & Order: Special Victims		*XXX: State of the Union* (2005, Action)		
	576	582	49	BET	106 & Park	*Diary of a Mad Black Woman* ★★ (2005, Comedy-Drama) Kimberly Elise.					Monica: Still	Monica: Still	Mo'Nique
	627	528	50	SPC	Stargate Atlantis (DVS)		Lost "Namaste"		Medium "Dear Dad ..."		Fringe "Johari Window"		InnerSpace (N)
	581	566	52	MTV	Peak Season	After	Cribs	Cribs	Buried	Life of Ryan	Teen Mom		MTV Live
	618	524	54	TROP	Parking Wars	Parking Wars	Rescue Ink		Dog Whisperer		End of Leash	Last 10	Tube Tales
	603	561	56	FOOD	Ricardo	Exotic	Dinner: Impossible		The F Word (N)		Good Eats	Good Eats	Restaurant
	261	394	60	V	Murder, She Wrote		Hallelujah	When I Laugh	Quantum Leap		Unscripted	Benmergui-Isr	Poltergeist
	621	527	63	STR	Look-A-Like	TMZ	The Ellen DeGeneres Show (N)		The View (HDTV) (N)		The Dr. Oz Show (HDTV)		TMZ
	553	546	65	TRE	Backyardigans	Night Garden	Waybuloo	Franklin	Little Bear	Maggie-Beast	Babar	Zigby	Max & Ruby
	526	507	249	VIVA	Cold Case		Missing "Thin Air"		The Closer "Flashpoint"		Cold Case		Psychic Inv.
	300	601	301	M1	*Courage*	*Unstable Fables: Goldilocks & 3 Bears Show*			*Quantum of Solace* ★★ (2008, Action) Daniel Craig.				*The Wrestler*
	305	612	306	PIX	(7:15) *The Pathfinder* ★★ (1996, Historical Drama)				*Meet the Parents* ★★★ (2000, Comedy) Robert De Niro.				*City Sea*
	520	146	-	DISC	Daily Planet (N)		How It's Made	How It's Made	Destroyed	Destroyed	License to Drill (N)		Daily Planet
	637	-	-	TVLND	Red Green	Red Green	Fantasy Island		Hart to Hart		Andy Griffith	Phil Silvers	Bizarre
	605	-	-	FASH	FT	Fashion Tele.	FashionTele	RAW	Canada's Next Top Model		Australia's Next Top Model		Pretty Wicked

critics'corner

Accidental Friendship
A homeless woman and a police officer forge an unlikely bond in this 2008 tear-jerker. Homeless Yvonne has her two dogs and not much else. Tami, the cop, recently ended a relationship. Both gain a great deal from their friendship despite having little in common. Ben Vereen appears as another homeless person. 9 AM on SHO

NCIS
A controversial blogger who had accused Gibbs and the team of mishandling a case turns up dead. That means the team has to take a second look at that case — the death of a lieutenant — in order to solve the mystery of the blogger's murder in "The Inside Man." 8 PM on GTV CBS

Scrubs
This is why cheating doesn't pay, boys and girls. In this new episode, a student cheats on an exam, and Dr. Cox forces the whole class to pay the price. Denise spills a surprising piece of information in "Our True Lies." 9 PM on ABC

It's no Hogwarts but it's pretty darn close

J.K. Rowling has spent more than $4 million US on a new mansion — without even viewing it properly, femalefirst.co.uk reports. The Harry Potter author splashed out on the property in Edinburgh, Scotland, last month. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Celebrity Buzz

Not a regular toque

BOOSTING JAPANESE HAT SALES When Michael C. Hall won a Golden Globe award for Best Actor in a Television Drama, the Dexter star made no mention of cancer, but backstage, he told reporters that he was "on the road to recovery" after secretly battling Hodgkin's lymphoma, us-magazine.com reports.

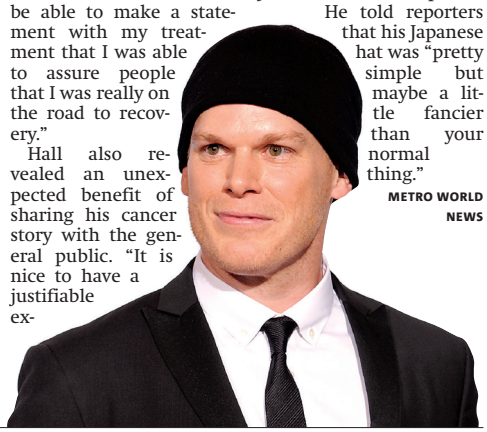
"I had every intention of keeping it quiet, but because the award shows were imminent, I figured I'd make a statement," said the 38-year-old actor, who said in a statement last week that he was nearing the end of his treatment and that his disease was now in remission.

He added, "It was nice to be able to make a statement with my treatment that I was able to assure people that I was really on the road to recovery."

Hall also revealed an unexpected benefit of sharing his cancer story with the general public. "It is nice to have a justifiable excuse for accessorizing," he joked of his black cap.

He told reporters that his Japanese hat was "pretty simple but maybe a little fancier than your normal thing."

METRO WORLD NEWS



Just call me 'Giorgio Cluni'

NEXT HE'LL BE RIDING A VESPA AND SAYING 'CIAO' George Clooney made a point of walking the Golden Globes red carpet with Italian girlfriend Elisabetta Canalis, and if his friends have anything to say about it, he'll be walking with her down the aisle soon as well.

"When you find love after years of looking, you want to shout it from the rooftops and that's just what he was doing," a Clooney pal tells Popeater. "He is crazy about her. I have never seen him like this before. He's smitten."

METRO WORLD NEWS

And the Golden Globe for the dullest potential couple goes to ... 'Gennifer'!

CLAP. CLAP. YAWN. Ever since Jennifer Aniston and Gerard Butler filmed their upcoming movie The Bounty Hunter, rumours have flown that the pair have engaged in a little romance on the side, popeater.com reports.

Although both denied reports, when the A-list actors took the stage at the Golden Globes together, their awkward body language sparked a few questions.

Aniston and Butler presented the award for Best Screenplay — which, incidentally, went to Up in the Air — with little banter or fanfare, making the website speculate there is something going on between them two of them.

"It's an honour for us to present this award together," Butler began. "Yep, it is," Aniston responded.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

GETTY IMAGES PHOTOS

Living the British dream

FREE BOOZE AND BANGERS AND MASH After the success of the Punch Bowl, his London pub, Guy Ritchie is looking into opening outposts in New York and Los Angeles, according to People magazine.

"It's in the early stages of development. He's looking at premises now," a source says. "Guy is really excited and he's definitely planning some fun ideas with the drinks."

The director is apparently also interested in brewing his own beer, and has already registered a few names, including Bitta Ritchie and Punch Bowl Ale.

METRO WORLD NEWS

Follow these celebrities on Twitter...

CelebTweets

AMY WINEHOUSE is sick of her father talking to the press, **BEN STILLER** gets Conan O'Brien to ignore his own troubles and help those in need, **JASON MRAZ** knows what he's looking for, and **DEMI MOORE** had her own reasons for staying home from the Golden Globes.

@amyjademermaid WHY don't my dad WRITE a SONG when somethin bothers him instead of going on national tv? an you thought YOUR parents were embarrassing

@RedHourBen Thanks to Co-Co for getting the message out tonight about donating to help Haiti

@jason_mraz Is there a website yet created for singles seeking casual spooning?

@mrskutcher feeling sick and having a bad hair day

METRO WORLD NEWS

Tiger's eyes

ARE ON THE BALL NOT THE BREASTS Tiger Woods has his comeback to golf all planned out, according to Radar Online. The scandal-plagued athlete, who's reportedly staying at a Mississippi rehab facility to deal with his sex addiction, is planning to be back on the PGA tour by the spring, sources tell the Web site.

"Tiger is totally devastated," a source says. "He wants to show everyone that he intends to change."

METRO WORLD NEWS

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CUBA
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All Inclusive – 7 nights
Thu, Jan 28, Add taxes & fees $204

PUERTO PLATA
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DOMINICAN REPUBLIC
Catalonia Gran Dominicus Cameleon Select ★★★★
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The Weather Network
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Today Flurries 40% 1°/ -8°
Wednesday Partly cloudy -3° / -5°
Thursday Sunny 1°/ -3°

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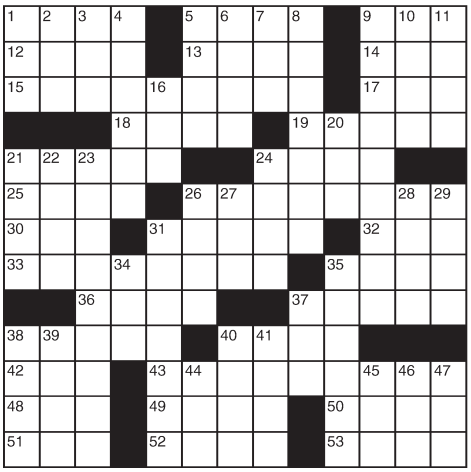
Take Five

For more delicious Metro recipes, visit: metronews.ca/food



ACROSS

1 Put one's foot down?
5 Level
9 Boston — Party
12 Tittle
13 Staffer
14 Massage
15 Suburban parent, maybe
17 Exist
18 Elbow counterpart
19 Loop in lace
21 Superhero garments
24 Work station
25 Oodles
26 Not to be tossed aside?
30 Chum
31 Bed cover
32 Summertime mo.
33 Cast members
35 As well
36 Covered walkway
37 Sword handles
38 Wan
40 Canaanite's deity
42 Mainlander's memento
43 Wife of a links nut
48 Bobby of hockey
49 Always
50 Protuberance
51 Dine on
52 Pedestal feature
53 Leaves

DOWN

1 A sib
2 Excessively
3 List-ending abbr.
4 Small bundle
5 Passenger's payment
6 Rickey flavouring
7 Commotion
8 Storm
9 Part of a mouse, maybe
10 Franc replacement
11 Help in crime
16 Navy rank (Abbr.)
20 "Life — cabaret, ..."
21 Team leader (Abbr.)
22 Winged
23 Pullover garment
24 Union fees
26 Comical Caroline
27 Ending for musket or market
28 Insatiable desire
29 Vanity cases?
31 Mooched
34 Multipurpose truck
35 Under the weather
37 "Hee —"
38 Lotion additive
39 Antitoxins
40 Wasn't colorfast
41 Frizzy hairstyle
44 Eggs
45 "Cock-a-doodle- —!"
46 Rhyming tribute
47 Film director Craven

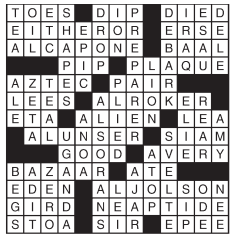
Sudoku

For more/less challenging Sudoku puzzles, visit metronews.ca

HOW TO PLAY: Digits 1 through 9 will appear once in each zone – one zone is an outlined 3x3 grid within the larger puzzle grid. There are nine zones in the puzzle. Do not enter a digit into a box if it already appears elsewhere in the same zone, row across or column down the entire puzzle.

		7		3	5	4		
4	3		7		2			
	2	1		9		5		
3	6			4		7		1
	9						3	
5		4		6			8	9
		6		8		1	4	
			5		1		6	8
		9	4	7		3		

PREVIOUS DAY'S CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU ANSWERS:



5	1	8	6	3	4	2	7	9
4	7	9	2	8	1	5	3	6
3	2	6	9	7	5	4	8	1
1	9	2	5	6	3	8	4	7
7	5	3	8	4	9	1	6	2
8	6	4	7	1	2	3	9	5
6	4	1	3	2	7	9	5	8
9	3	7	1	5	8	6	2	4
2	8	5	4	9	6	7	1	3

On the web

For more games and 60 additional daily cartoon strips, visit metronews.ca

Metro Recipe of the Day

Marmalade-glazed Mackerel with Apples

INGREDIENTS:

4 mackerel fillets
4 tsp (20 mL) olive oil
2 apples, peeled
Leaves from 1 sprig fresh rosemary
3 tbsp (45 mL) orange marmalade
3 tbsp (45 mL) cider vinegar

METHOD:

1. Remove any bones that remain in mackerel. Preheat grill to high. Brush a shallow flameproof dish with a little oil and put mackerel fillets in it, skin side up. Make three cuts across each mackerel fillet, scoring skin to prevent it from curling during cooking.

2. Cut apples into quarters and remove cores, then cut each quarter into three or four slices. Put in dish around mackerel. Brush apples and fish with remaining oil. Sprinkle rosemary leaves over fish.

3. Grill mackerel 2-3 minutes or until skin is browned in places. Stir marmalade and vinegar in bowl. Turn over mackerel and apple slices. Brush some marmalade mixture over apples, then spoon remainder evenly over mackerel. Grill 2 minutes or until fish and apples are well browned in places. Fish should be firm and cooked, with flakes that separate easily and look opaque. Serve immediately.

SERVES 4

rd.ca

For nutritional information on this and other great recipes, go to rd.ca or check out Key Ingredients in this month's Reader's Digest, on newsstands now!

Horoscopes by Sally Brompton sallybrompton.com

For Sally's expanded daily and weekend horoscopes, visit metronews.ca

ARIES ♈
MARCH 21-APRIL 20
Others may be baffled by what's going on but you will observe and understand what they have overlooked.

TAURUS ♉
APRIL 21-MAY 21
You will see or hear something to your advantage, something that gives you an edge in your career.

GEMINI ♊
MAY 22-JUNE 21
Question what you are told today, even if the "experts" say you have no right to challenge their authority.

CANCER ♋
JUNE 22-JULY 22
Don't give up on something just because it is proving tougher than you expected.

LEO ♌
JULY 23-AUG 23
It might be tempting to interfere in someone else's business but the planets warn you will regret it if you do.

VIRGO ♍
AUG 24-SEPT 22
Don't push yourself too hard today. Persuade those you live and work with to shoulder more of the burden.

LIBRA ♎
SEPT 23-OCT 23
You will find it easy to forgive other people's mistakes today but maybe not quite so easy to forgive your own

SCORPIO ♏
OCT 24-NOV 22
New information will come your way today, information that may cause you to doubt some of the things you have been told.

SAGITTARIUS ♐
NOV 23-DEC 21
You will get your message across today, even though some people would like it better if you stayed silent.

CAPRICORN ♑
DEC 22-JAN 20
You know instinctively what is the right thing to say and you know beyond a shadow of a doubt that you have a duty to speak up.

AQUARIUS ♒
JAN 21-FEB 18
With the Sun about to move into your sign this is a great time for taking the initiative.

PISCES ♓
FEB 19-MARCH 20
If you want to be alone with your thoughts today that's fine: Just go off by yourself for a while and let the world fend for itself.

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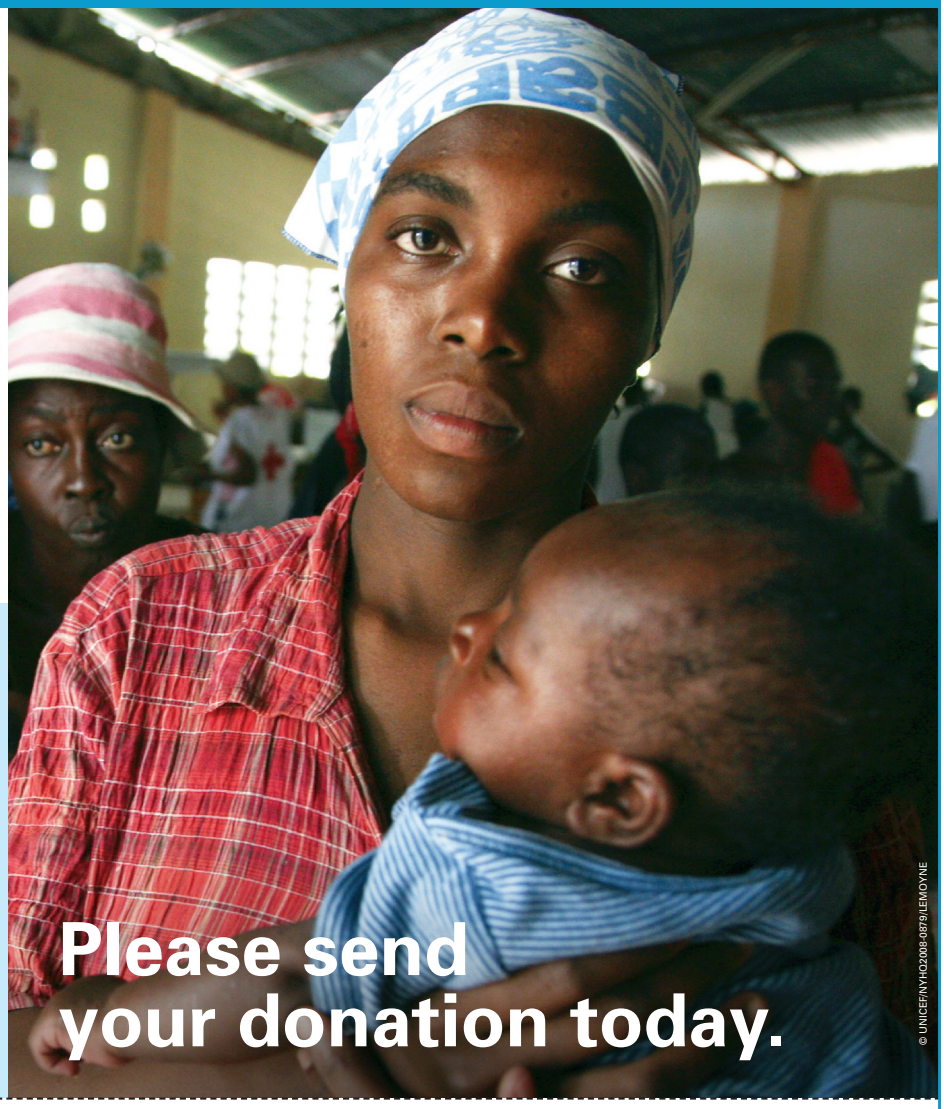

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